OUR WAY

Watchtower 2024

Watchtower 2024

OUR WAY *our way*

Our History

Our way can only be defined through our memories, the pieces that make up the culture of Rock Island High School, the moments we'll cling to forever. Whether it's breaking a school record, scoring the game-winning buzzer-beater, receiving a standing ovation, or even sharing a smile with that one person you see in the hallway every day, the way we live our lives as Rocky students comes in many shapes and sizes. Not only is our way unique for every student, it's unique for every year you spend in these halls. The way you live as a freshman is entirely different to your way as a senior. Your way becomes your legacy.

THE WAYS *the ways* WE THRIVE *we thrive*

Senior Year

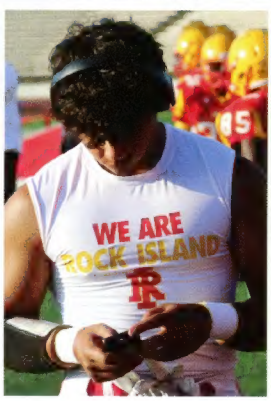
2023

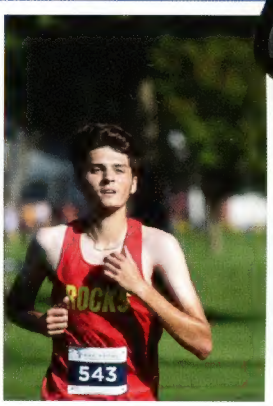
"I'll describe my legacy here at the Rock as unique. It has made me a better and more mature person, to be able to handle real life situations. I'll always take with me the relationships and memories created here."
- Niyo Fiston

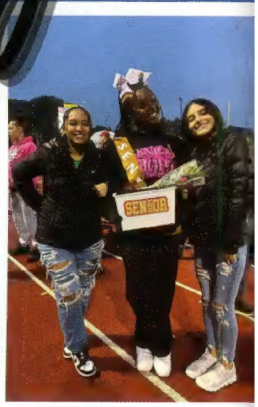
"The legacy everyone talks about is really based on enjoying life and the opportunities given. We make memories with the people here that I'll remember forever. As a person, it made me realize how important every moment is. Just live life to the fullest."
- Gabriel Albarran

OUR LEGACY

our legacy



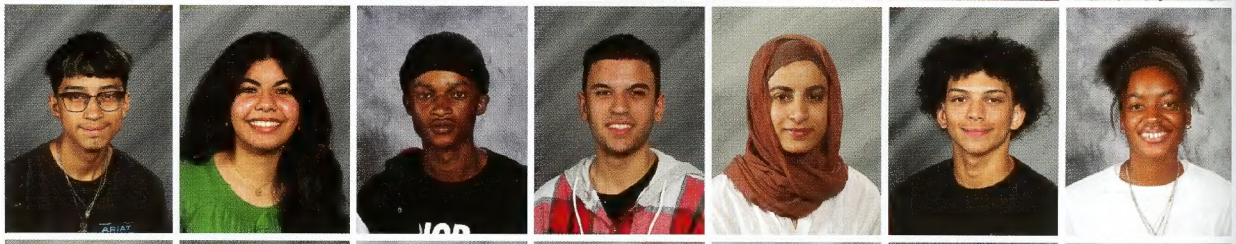




Our legacy is something different than what other classes have ever experienced. Coming into Rocky during COVID as freshmen could have been isolating. But, here we are- a family, who supported and guided each other to greatness. And that is something that can't be forgotten. It's OUR LEGACY.

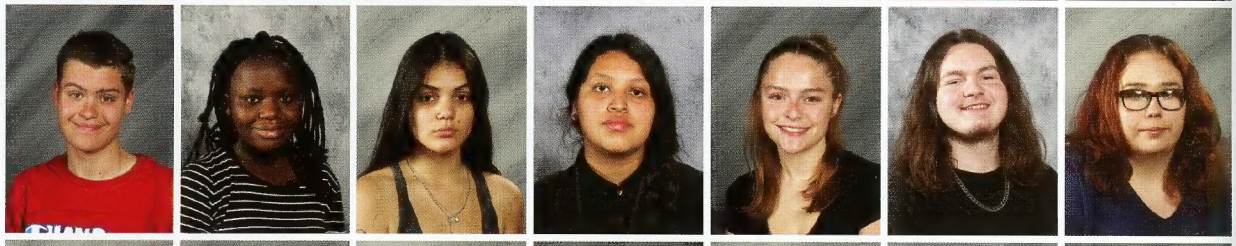
THE CLASS OF 2024

Salvador Abarca
Giselle Aceviz
Marcelino Aguilera
Rasul Ahmed
Ntinyegezwa Aidan
Jesus Alba
Jose Alba



Gabriel Albarran
Maryam Alhamdan
Kamlete Alimasi
Ali Al Janabi
Israa Al Janabi
Joseph Allen
Kyra Allen

Brendon Anderson
Brenna Anderson
Jacobian Anderson
Markeisha Atwater
Marquise Atwater
Meli Awazi
Fidelia Awoudi



David Axnix
Nyota Bahininwa
Alyssa Balandran
Danna Balcazar Salas
Delaney Barbee
Chastin Barker
Hailey Becker

Presley Behrens
Mpawenimana Bella
Erica Bell-Mangrum
Isabella Belshause-Pickslay
Jackson Bennett
Andres Benton
Daianna Biswell

COVID → NOW

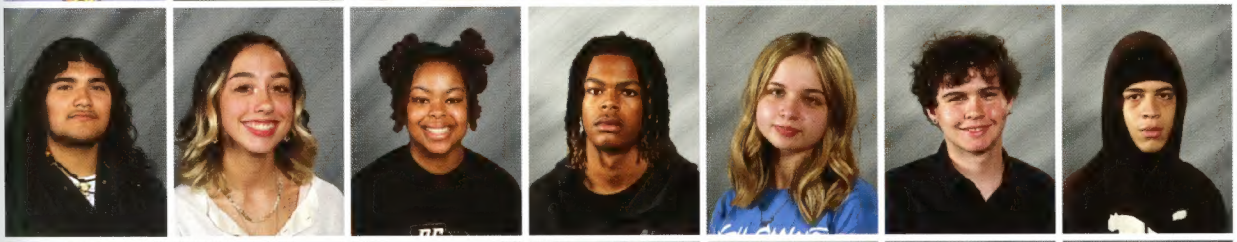
Addison Bomelyn | Lexie Walker | Alex Romo | Riley Levan | Aidan Brokaw | Isaiah Samuelson

Seniors show how they have changed since they started high school online during the pandemic.

Halle Bobb
Addison Bomelyn
Kal Boswell
Andrew Bourdeaux
Mina Boyer
Harrison Braddy
Jett Brandt

Nininahazwe Brigitte
Aidan Brokaw
Michael Brose
Christopher Brown
Jonathan Brown
Joseph Brown
Joshua Brown

Kylen Brozovich
Niyongabo Bucumi
Sabrina Bufford
Payten Bunch
Jayda Carlin
Ethan Carls
Alexander Carnahan



Angel Carranza
Delaney Carroll
DaNaijah Cartwright
Dvonte Cartwright
Marley Casselman
Kiefer Chandler
Elijah Cheeks

Shaylea Childress
Neiman Childs-Johnson
Anthony Cimarrusti
Elena Cisneros
Hunter Coakley
Robvasha Coleman
Leah Conner

Matthew Coon
Juan Cordova
Myracle Craig
Samuel Crandall
Cesar Cruz-Aguilera
Nick Cunningham
Miya Davis

Eh Day
Vivian Decker
Alexander Dee
Mia DelaRosa
Andrew DeMarlie
Amelia Dennis
Haiven Desadler

Avery Dickens
Conner Dilulio
Ntiruvakure Dinye
Guillermo Dominguez
Irakoze Dorcas
Zachery Draper
Josephine Driskill

Xavier Duster
Antoine Ebambwe
Dominick Eckmann-Allred
Kailyn Eichelberger
Corbyn Ellis
Mackenzie Elsey
Presence Erodiance

Alaina Esposito
Eva Essman
Nevaeh Faison
Daryl Farmer
Mackenzie Farrance
Lucette Feigley
Evan Ferkel

Niyogushima Fiston
Avery Flactiff
Karimah Flowers
Honor Ford
Aiden Frantz
Joshua Galeana
Julian Gaona

Natalia Garcia
Xavior Garza
Gavin Gasper
Jade Gasper
Angelo Gay
Marcus Gay
Haley Gehrmann

Gabriella Gonzalez
Dar'Terius Grady
Gabrielle Grandberry
Nayeli Graves
Dillon Gray
Justice Gregory
La'Mark Griffith

Lauren Groene
Haley Gruner
Madjid Gunashev
Eli Gustafson
Luke Gustafson
Guadalupe Guzman Hurtado
Fanny Halleux

Addison Bomelyn and Asia Stern

Emma Penn and Lexie Walker

Ashlynn Simmons and Emmalee VanThournout

Eva Essman and Josephine Driskill

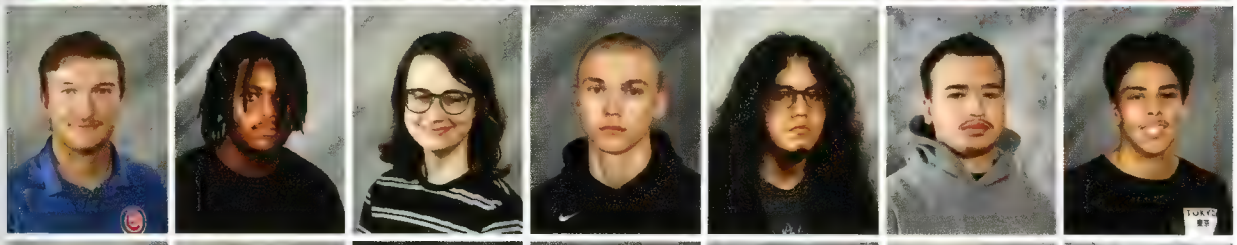
Jade Gasper and Gavin Gasper

Sanaa Hampton
Eric Hantz
Zafirah Hassan
Alexis Hayes
Madelynn Hayes
Skyah Haynes
Michael Hays

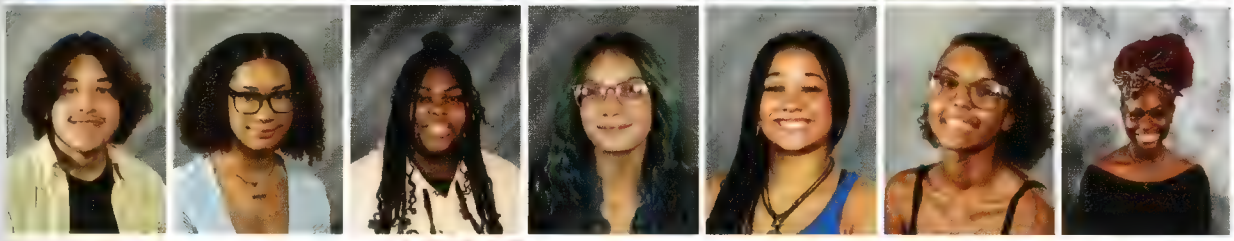
Ku Say He
Luis Hernandez
Jalonna Hickman
Roxanne Hobert
John Holland
Ashton Holmes
Thomas Honeycutt

O-Mirrah Horne
Jessamine Hounkpati
Gabriella Howard
Wah Hsee
Dah Gay Htoo
Hae Peh Htoo
Say Klu Taw Htoo

Jaydon Hudson
Austin Huff
MJ Hummel
Derrick Jabbah
Alexander Jackson
Daniel Jackson
Dezmund Jackson

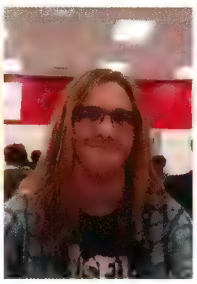


Mark Jackson
Sean-Anthony Jackson
Kat Jacoby
Dominic James
Jose Jaramillo
Richard Jett
Julian Jimenez



Mateo Jimenez
Mahogani Johnson
Brady Johnston
Devyn Jones
Jada Jones
Mackenzie Jones
Deborah Kalonda

"I joined because I like history, and for college credit."
- Shannon McFate, on taking AP European History



"I joined because it looks good on college applications, and it's challenging."
- Sebastian Tuominen-Pawlik, on taking AP Calculus

"I decided to take the class so that it could be more challenging, and for college credit."
- Shalom Moore, on taking English 101

"I joined because it was available, and for the college credit."
- Fidelia Awoudi, on taking English 101

"I joined so I could learn how to code."
- James Westmorland, on taking AP Computer Science

"I joined for the dual credit, and my English teacher last year said I should take it."
- Kat Jacoby, on taking English 101

"I'm taking the classes because I'm looking to become an engineer."
- Joe Brown, on taking AP Computer Science

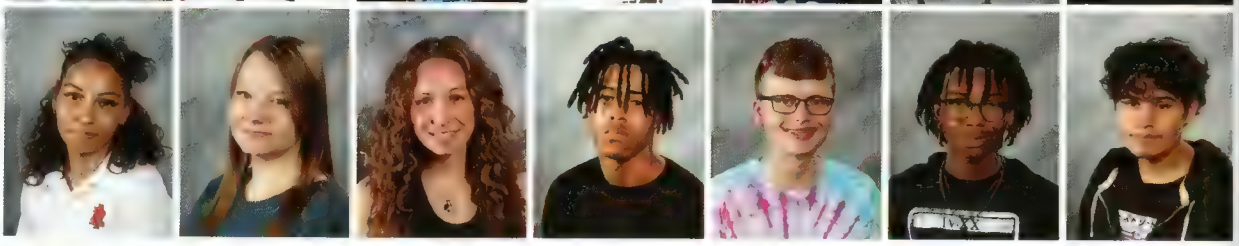
SENIORS set for GET College

Dajanique Kelley
Andrew Kerno
Karshma Khalaqi
Zamir Khalaqi
Hailey Kirk
Joy Kitterman
Arafati Kizungu

Karim Kizungu
Stantrel Knight
Leo Kopplin
Seth Kraus
Alaina Kress
Madelyn Kress
Kaydon Krup

Eh Kaw Ku
John Kwizera
Chad LaMay
KJ LaMonte
Tavien Lankford
Landon
Lawver-Andrews
Lennon
Lawver-Andrews

JaTaya Lee
Carly LeMaster
Riley Levan
Lakavion Lewis-Glass
Caleb Lindsey
Alexander Lloyd
Juan Lopez



baby BALLERS

Dezmund Jackson

Alex Romo

Conner Dilulio

Addison Bomelyn

Amare Overton

Lydia Thomer

Delaney Carroll

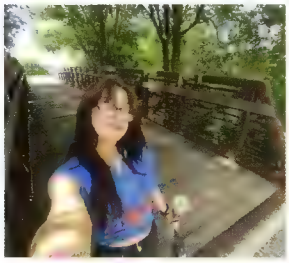
Julian Lopez
Hudson Love
Drake Lowry
Bahati Lubembela
Antoinette Lwebula
Mwabo Lwebula
Emily Maess

Asa Mahn
Sean Manary
Ogiste Maombi
Manuel Marcelena
Andrew Marquez
Brayden Marshall
Avante Martin

Toshanne Martin
Eliana Martinez
Noe Martinez
Kylee Maston
Almir Matias
Zachary McCall
Nadia McCaw

Lela McConchie
Laticia McCray Brown
Daniel McGhee
Kade McKillip
Alayna McKinley
Alec McKinney
Elijah McRae

SENIOR Studies



"I love the river because it is so calming and quiet!"
- Eliana Martinez

"I like to study in my bed because it's quiet and calm!"
- Delaney Carroll

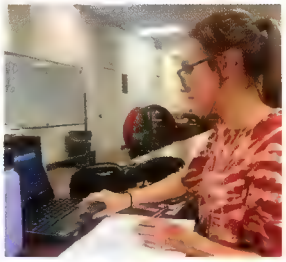
"I enjoy studying in study hall. I put my music on, and get a lot done."
- Madelynn Hayes

"I love my book nook because I made it myself, and it's so comfy!"
- Jade Gasper

"I like studying at Starbucks because the noise helps me focus!"
- Cienna Reed

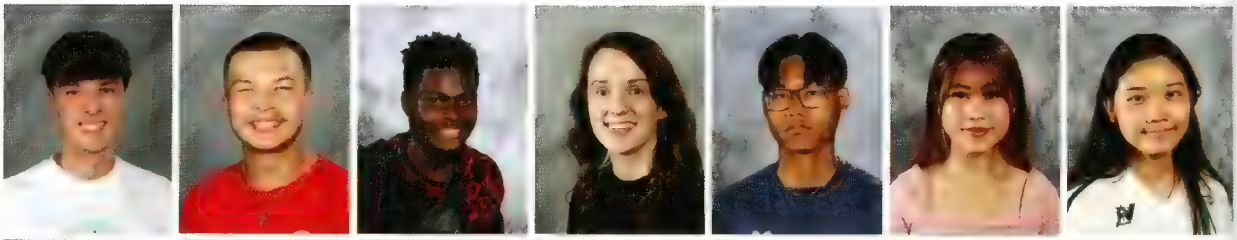
"I like studying on my bedroom floor. It helps me stay awake and focused."
- Josie Driskill

"My couch is my favorite study spot because it's comfy and relaxing."
- Gabriella Gonzalez

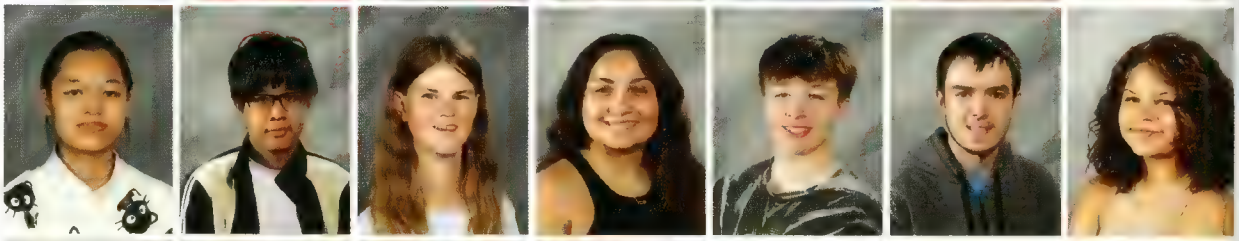


"I like studying at Awake because it's quiet and relaxing, and I can get a drink!"
- Cheyeane Stanley

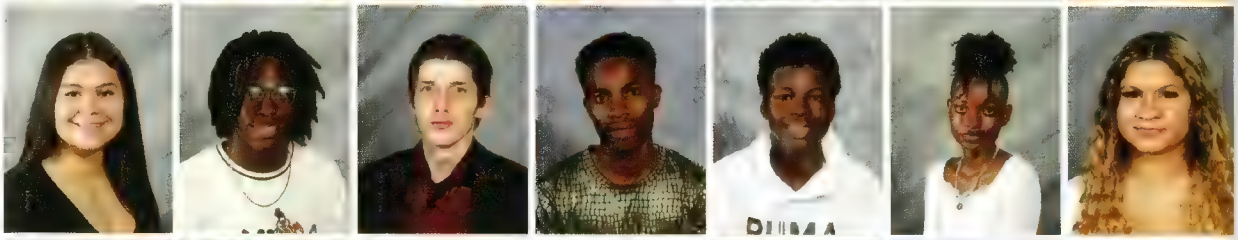
Owen Michaels
Michael Mitchell
Lumumba Mkambilwa
Ella Mlekush
Eh Kler Moo
Eh Sa Moo
Lah Set Kpru Moo



Ta Ear Paw Ler Moo
Taw Ler Moo
Shalom Moore
Sirenity Morales
William Morris
Brayden Moseley
Mariah Mowery



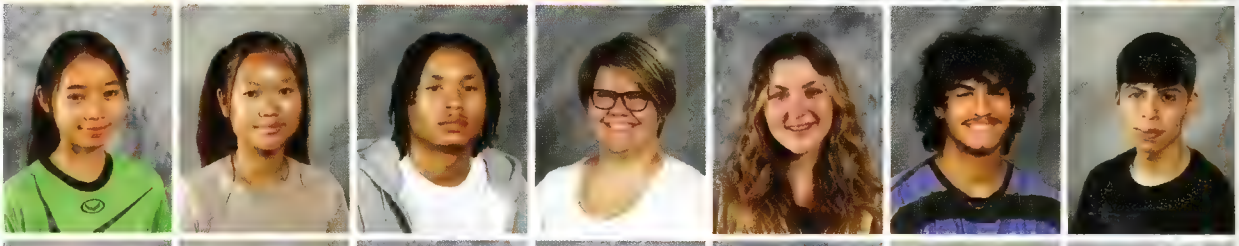
Amanda Mumma
Rashaad Muskeyvalley
Jaden Nadeau
Isack Ndarama
Elie Ndayambaje
Sandrine Nduwimana
J'Zaeya Neal



Jaydan Neaveill
Melanie Nebinger
Alesia Nicholson
Man Nuam
Isiah Nunn
Queen Nyinawabavuna
Faith O'Brien

Larry Olivier
Amare Overton
Cecilia Padilla
Marwa Parhar
Abbigail Parr
Eh Ksaw Paw
Eh Say Paw

Ka Yot Paw
Lah Hser Paw
Kaelem Payton
Jamie Pearson
Emma Penn
Ely Perez
Esteban Perez



Riley Porter
Jayden Putnam
Wazir Qubadi
Fahima Rahimi
Smay Rai
Julio Ramirez
Leticia Ramirez

Leonardo Rangel
Analice Rea
Cienna Reed
Paul Reed
Eli Reedy
Ian Regur
Johana Reyes

Gabriel Richardson
Myla Richardson
Tayven Richardson
Yolonda Richardson
Oliana Richey
Rickey Robinson
Rebeca Robles

Jesse Rockhold
Cheyenne Rodriguez
Angel Rodriguez Jacobo
David Rogers
Ava Rohr
Jimena Romero-Escamilla
Alex Romo

Aaliyah Ross
Autumn Rubingh
Khadija Sakho
Joanna Salas
Nawa Salim
Isaiah Samuelson
Carmelita Sanchez Morales

Jamaja Scarver
Gracie Scheper
Nahida Sekandari
Nawidullah Sekandari
Amalia Serrano
DeAndrew Severs
Bailey Sholl

Ashlynn Simmons
Brendan Smith
Christian Smith
Ethan Smith
Htee Soe
Preston Sonnenberg
Cecelia Sountris

LOOKING FORWARD TO THE FUTURE

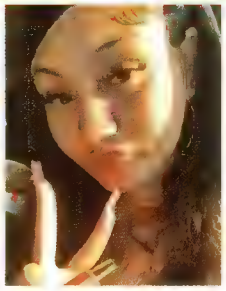
"I think I'm going to be a doctor."
- Dah Htoo

"To finish writing my book, and at some point, have the ability to retire my parents."
- Lucette Feigley

"To go to college, and some day, become a child life specialist, so I can help kids just like me."
- Ceci Padilla

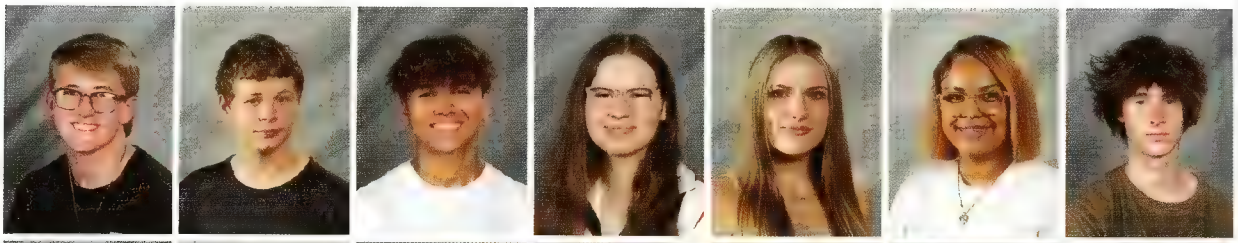
"After high school, I want to graduate college to become a vet nurse."
- Brenna Anderson

"My goal after college is to continue my love for baseball, whether it be through playing, working in the front offices, or coaching."
- Jackson Bennett

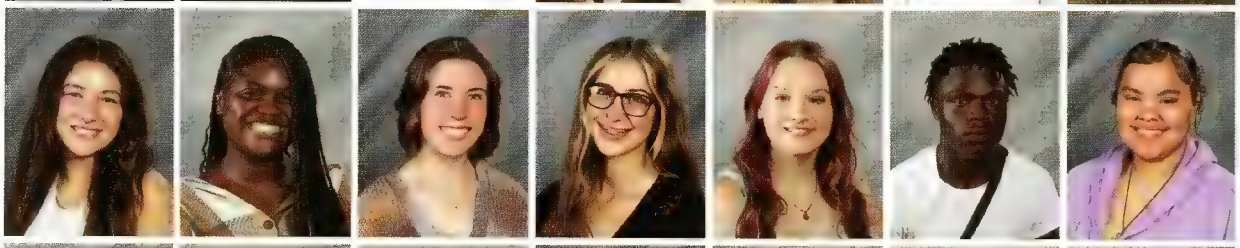


"To be a multi-millionaire."
- Nevaeh Pedraza

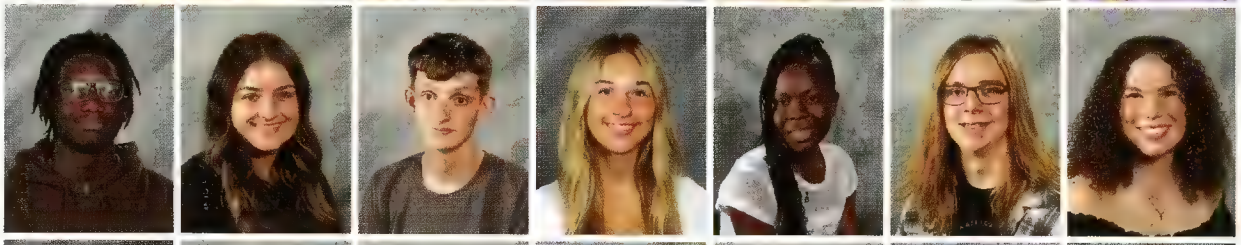
Tyler Spence
Spencer Staggs
Hunter St Amand
Alivia Stanley
Cheyeane Stanley
Mersades St Clair
Nicolas Stephens



Asia Stern
Ke'Erica Stewart
Mary Stockdale
Autumn Stone
Aria Sulouff
Garr Tarr
Ma'Liyah Taylor



Jesse Thomas
Lydia Thomer
Aidan Thurman
Mallory Timm
Rosine Toyi
Sebastian Tuominen
Pawlik
Chloe Turner



Daryn Untiedt
Emmalee VanThournout
Eric Vazquez
Jorge Vega
Yulisa Vega Romo
Fred Venable
Hunter Verdeyen

Truth Vesey
Arek Viernow
Makayla Villarreal
Elijah Voorhis
Poe Dah Wah
Lexie Walker
Daveyon Wells

MISSING THE MOMENTS

"I think I will miss my Cross Country Team the most. I have created so many memories with those girls. It's going to be hard not seeing them every day."

- Norah Wright

"One thing I will miss from high school will be the library, and the librarians, Mrs. Mendelin and Mrs. Curtiss. Being able to go by the library, and be welcomed by such amazing women is something I'll certainly miss."

- Presley Behrens

"What I'll miss the most from high school will be my friends, and all the great memories we've made together. Over the last four years, my friends have been there for me, and have helped me through a lot."

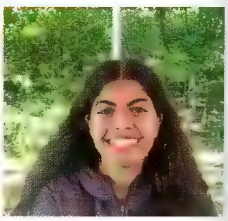
- Egan Westmorland

"The one thing I will miss about high school is going to all of the events and being part of the student section at basketball and volleyball games."

- Cody Wolf

"What I will miss the most is seeing my friends every day in class."

- Riley Levan

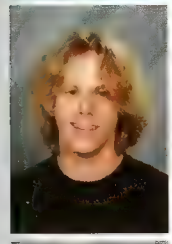


"The thing I will miss most about high school are all the memories of Cross Country with my team. A lot of my friends are on the team, and I enjoy spending time with them."

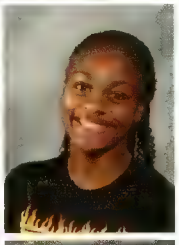
- Maryam Alhamdan

Infinity Westfie
Egan Westmorland
James Westmorland

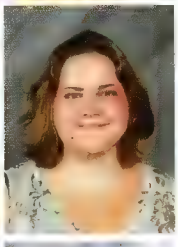
Josiah Weston
Makena Whitcanack
Skyler White



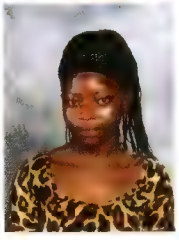
John Wilde
Parker Williams
Julius Willis



KayNiya Willoughby
Mayani Wilondja
LaTonyiah Wilson

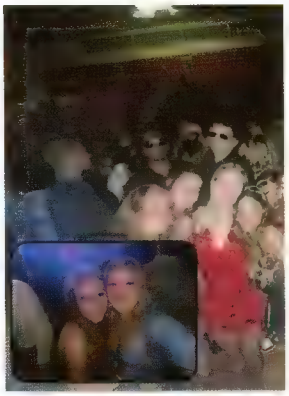


Cody Wolf
Kaliyah Woods
Maisy Woods



Norah Wright
Aaron Yoder
Sada Yondo

Kenedi Young
Alejandra Zetina



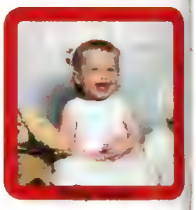
PEBBLES

Mackenzie Elsey

Addison Bomelyn

Presley Behrens

Haley Gehrmann



Alaina Kress

Laticia McCray Brown

Jade Gasper

Kenedi Young

Emma Penn

Mariah Mowery

Josie Driskill

TO ROCKS

Larry Olivier

Brenna Anderson

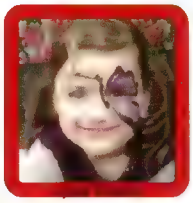
Jada Jones

Lauren Groene

Emmalee VanThournout

Ke'Erica Stewart

John Wilde



Eli Reedy

Justice Gregory

Payten Bunch

Football Games <3

"My favorite memory of junior year is Homecoming."
- Grace Vidmar

"The cheerleaders and fans going crazy, as the Rocks scored touchdowns!"
- Nevaeh McQuay

"Finding a friend group that is always down to hang out, support, and love me, no matter what."
- A'rion Lonergan-Shinskia

OUR MEMORIES

our memories

Our memories of Rocky come from so many p aces. Whether we are on the field or in the stands, on the stage or on the court, we understand we are creating memories that we will look back on with pride. Our paths may vary, but our memories are the same.

THE CLASS OF 2025

Katelyn Adams
Elaina Adlfinger
Isabella Adner
Jordan Ahrens
Luis Albarran
Cristina Aleman
Hussein Alhamdan

Ali Aliev
Olivia-Ann Almanza
Rolando Almanza
Taniya Altman
Camron Anderson
Keziah Anderson
Ryley Anderson

Alba Arellano
Kaily Armstrong
Luis Arredondo-Lopez
David Avila-Perez
Ia'yahh Ayyash
Ebubu Babocha
Vital Babwiriza

Carson Banks
Bibi Barikzay
Karli Barker
Addison Barrell
Alejandro Barrera-Gandarias
Cory Beltran
Annika Bergheger

• • • LIFE BEYOND THE HALLS • • •

Gunnar Carroll has been playing hockey for the Quad City Hockey Association since he was 5. "My goal for this season is to, hopefully, make it to playoffs, if not win," he explained. Gunnar hopes to play in college, but he is not sure where yet. "My favorite memory was last year at playoffs because everyone brought the energy, and it was exciting. I think I consider how much I've learned, and how much time I've devoted to hockey as my biggest success," Carroll stated.

Grace Hathaway has been doing pageants for 2 years. "My biggest goal is to represent my community, and spread my community service initiative, 'Type 1 of a Kind', to which I educate about Type 1 Diabetes and the warning signs," she stated. Grace's biggest success is becoming Miss Rock Island Teen 2023. "My favorite memory would definitely be being in the parades with Miss Blackhawk Valley 2023, Brianna Legner, Miss Blackhawk Valley's Teen 2023, Clarisa Ostrowski, and the beautiful princesses from the Miss Blackhawk Valley Princess! I would love to keep doing this, and love spreading awareness in my community about my community service initiative!" she explained.

Cristina Alemán has been doing henna since May of 2023. Her biggest goal is to create art that makes people feel confident. "My biggest success is people asking me to book appointments, and pay money for the art that I am doing," she explained. Cristina wants to do something with her art after high school. "I really want to do graphic design in college. My favorite memory is sitting in Mrs. Anderson's class during Pride Time, and just relaxing while painting on canvases," she stated.

Aundrea Doss has been painting for about two years now. "My goal is to show people that there's ways to express yourself through art," Doss stated. Aundrea has made many different paintings, some being for teachers here at Rocky. "My favorite memory of painting is when I went to a park and watched the sunset, while painting," she explained. Aundrea doesn't plan on making a career out of her painting, "But, if life leads me to that path, I will take it," Doss stated.

Mylie Shook has been a competitive figure skater for 7 years. "I don't like the technical part of competing. I like the show part of skating. My biggest goal is to tour with Disney On Ice," she explained. She competed this past summer at National Showcase in Boston, and came home with 5 first place medals, and 2 first overalls. "I would say my biggest success was this past summer in Boston," Shook explained. Mylie hopes to skate for Miami Ohio University, and skate for their Synchronized Skating Team. "My biggest goal for this season is to have another successful year at National Showcase. I also hope to win State again for The Rivers Edge High School Figure Skating Team," Shook stated.

Ariyah Spoljoric has been drawing for about a year and a half. "My biggest success is that I've had many people ask me to draw something on them, multiple times," she explained. Ariyah hopes to one day become a tattoo artist to show off her amazing talent of drawing. "My favorite memory of drawing is that I made a drawing for my brother that he got tattooed on him," she stated. She loves to draw freehand, and just let the pen do its work.

Nevaeh McQuay has been doing competitive cheer for 9 years. "Although this past year, I've stopped, my goal last year was to bond more with my team and stay positive!" McQuay explained. She hopes to do cheerleading in college. "I don't necessarily have a favorite memory, but my favorite thing about this sport is having a lifelong second family," she stated. Neveah has also had huge success with making Worlds with her competitive cheer team!

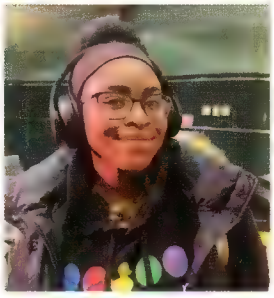
Joslyn Bernal
Francoise Betty
Jameson Billings
Kaylee Binion
Cadeau Biselsa
Quincy Black
Puratee Bogart-Pepper

Seraphine Bonyema
Zoe Bradley
Alexander Brelby
Joe Brooks
A'Keyla Brown
Sephannie Brown
Wyatt Bunch

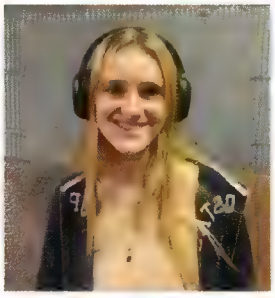
De'la Burmeister
Ler Bwe
Jo Campbell
Austin Cantrell
Xoey Cantu
Marco Carapia
Anarie Carlton

Gage Carothers
Caleb Carpenter
Gunnar Carroll
Madison Carroll
Finn Caulkins
Tullis Cavins
Bukeneza Cendrine

"I listen to Lofi Cumbia while I'm studying because it's upbeat, and allows me to stay focused."
- Yessenia Leos-Ochoa

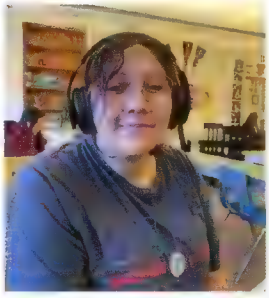


"I like to listen to piano music and instrumentals because it's calming, and the lack of words takes away possible distractions."
- Aunah Jones



"I like to listen to Sufjan Stevens and Lana Del Rey, just very relaxed music that helps me stay focused."
- Kayla Mathews

"I usually listen to musicals, such as *Hamilton*, or even more commonly, *Phantom of the Opera's* instrumental track."
- Wyatt Bunch



"I like listening to Lana Del Rey because it's really calming, and has a beat. I also like the lyrics a lot."
- Karina Mendoza

MUSIC NOTES & STUDY NOTES

JUNIOR JIBBITZ

"I only have a few jibbitz. The importance is still there. Watching the Chicago Bulls play brings me joy. My favorite shoes to wear are Jordans."
- Noemi Figueroa

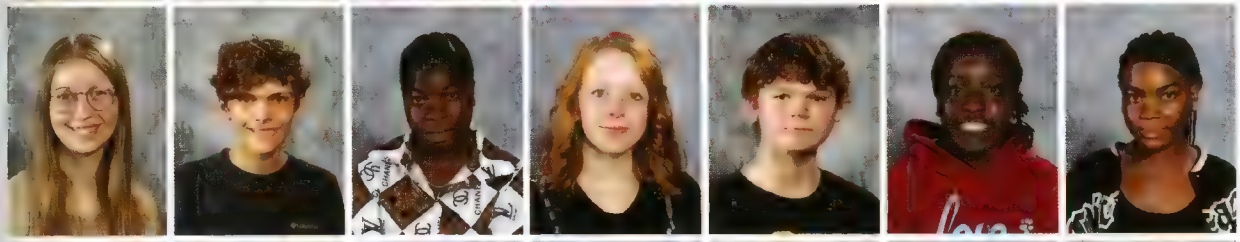
"They represent my personality because I'm fun, and I love to laugh."
- la'yahh Ayyash

"They represent me because I look up to Spider-Man, and I've always wanted to be just like him."
- Davonte Conner

"My crocs are very important to me, and I love to show off my jibbitz, as I'm a funny person, and all my jibbitz are funny and fun."
- LaNina Daugherty

"The jibbitz on my crocs are Frank Ocean and Tyler, The Creator, which are two of my favorite artists. They represent my love for music, and how much it plays a role in my every day life."
- A'rion Lonergan

Aundrea Doss
Trace Downing
Allison Drish
Isaiss Duarte
Justice Dunbar
Jazimine Eckmann-Allred
Christen Egan



Zoe Ehlers
Thom Elliott
Kashindi Emedi
Remi Engeland
Jayden Erps
Morebereza Fabiola
Luundo Famiya

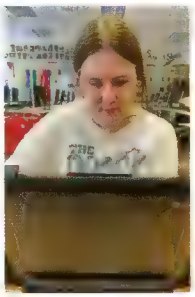
Joshua Farrance
Keyonte Farrow
Kaleb Faulkner
Mayah Fentress
Travonna Ferguson
Noemi Figueroa-Salinas
La'Rontae Ford

Arianna Fornal
Kale Foster
Dylan Frantz
Gavin Freitas
Alexis Gahimbare
Colin Galbraith
David Gallardo

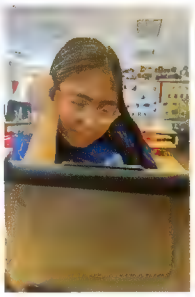
Juniors' COLLEGE PREP

"The way I prepare is by listening in class, and taking notes of things I believe will be important in the long run. I plan on going to a college to be an aesthetician, or where I can cheer or dance, things I love, and would like as a career. I can prepare by making sure the colleges have the things I am looking for. I want to make sure I follow my heart, and make sure I choose the right college for me."
- Riley Gray

"I am mostly doing Khan Academy practice tests, and refreshing myself on Algebra 2. It's a little stressful, but it's worth it. I am trying to figure out what I want to do for myself after high school, and once I get that straight, then I will start looking at colleges that specialize in that field, or have really good programs for it."
- NJ Nocentelli



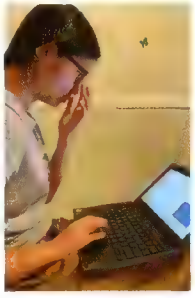
"I haven't really thought about it. Right now, I'm not doing much, just the regular classwork. But, I should start doing things like looking over examples of the SAT questions, ask people for advice, and do a few practices that will be beneficial. Right now, I want to be a botanist, so I am researching schools that have a major in botany. I also want to get into a good college, so I am doing my best to be on top of my work."
- Ywa Htoo



"I am going to study for the SAT test and stay focused in class, as well as complete all of my work. For my college search, I am going to take advantage of campus tours, and informational sessions."
- Kevion Wallace

"To prepare myself for big tests and things coming up, I've been doing practice questions in my free time, and signing up for the practice tests available in and out of school. To prepare myself for the college search, I've been looking, and using my resources from College Board, and asking family for suggestions."
- Aunah Jones

"I've been asking my older siblings for advice they have, and asking them what is on the SAT that can help prepare me. To prepare for the college search, I have talked to teachers about colleges that specialize in elementary education. I have also talked to my parents about their expectations for colleges I could go to."
- Joslynn Henderson



"I signed up for the PSAT to help me prepare for the actual SAT. I think that'll help me to know what the actual test is like. I'm really trying to keep my grades up, so that I can maintain a good GPA. I haven't really looked into colleges that much, but I have been getting college invitations, and just looking at those to see if they spark any interest."
- Eh Eh Poe

Aimable Ganza
Giovanni Garcia
Isaiah Garcia
Andrea Garcia-Gallegos
Avianna Gardner
V Jay Garrard
Jordohn Gillen

Essence Gilmore
Olivier Gisubizo
Aiden Glaski
Benjamin Goeh
Aramis Gomez
Lauren Gottcent
Bradley Grant

Gaheta Gratien
Riley Gray
Noah Guy
Cyrus Gwesinie
Chase Hadley
Malaya Haley
Chloe Harmon

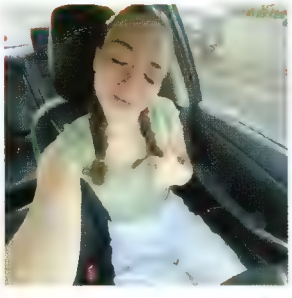
Grace Hathaway
Daniel Hauskins
Reagan Hawotte
Lukas Heine
Joslynn Henderson
Rayna Henry
Faith Herington

UNIQUE RIDES

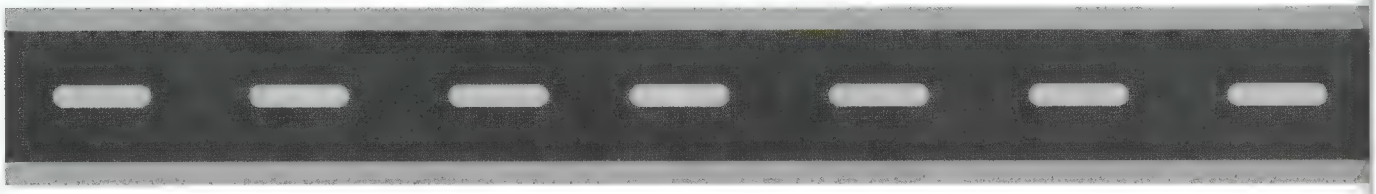
"The factory size of the tires are 30 inches, but I have 35 inch tires on my truck."
- Dillion DePaepe

"I have to manually roll up my windows with a window crank instead of having an automatic button."
- Alex Churchill

"I have a hidden compartment under my radio, where I keep all of my Insulin and glucose tablets."
- Grace Hathaway



"The one unique thing about my car is the name I gave her. I named her Misty, after a chicken that lived on a farm I visited, because the brakes make noises just like that chicken did."
- Mia Hixson



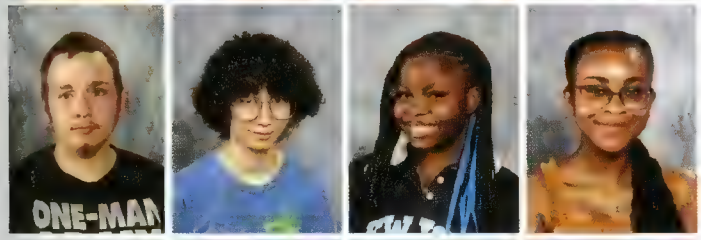
Kamiya Hill
Mia Hixson
Grace Hodonou
Cameron Holland

Karsen Horton
Louis Hoteling
Stella Houk
Timothy Howser

Moo Gay Htoo
Ywa Tar Hay Htoo
Benjamin Huisman
Nevaeh Hunter

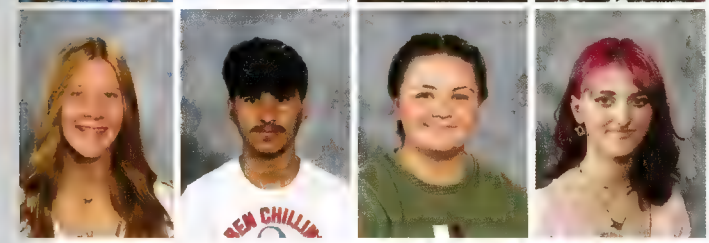
Olivier Itabelo
Amyah Jackson
Ki'Leyah Jackson
Nadiya Jackson

Hannah James
Birdie Johnson
Traveon Johnson
Zane Johnson



Zeppelin Johnson
Caydence Johnson-Scriver
Eliza Jolie
Aunah Jones

Olivia Kargl
Harrison Kelley
Jessa Kelley
Itabelo Kenasi



Jozie Kerr
Fayaz Khalaqi
Lillian King
Nyx King

IF YOU REALLY KNEW ME,

Dylan Frantz

"If you really knew me, you'd know that I've been cheering since I was 5 years old."

Puratee Bogart

"If you really knew me, you'd know that I've played softball since I was 7 years old, and I'm a pitcher."

Blake Howser

"If you knew me, you'd know that my eyes change color in different seasons."

IF YOU REALLY KNEW ME,

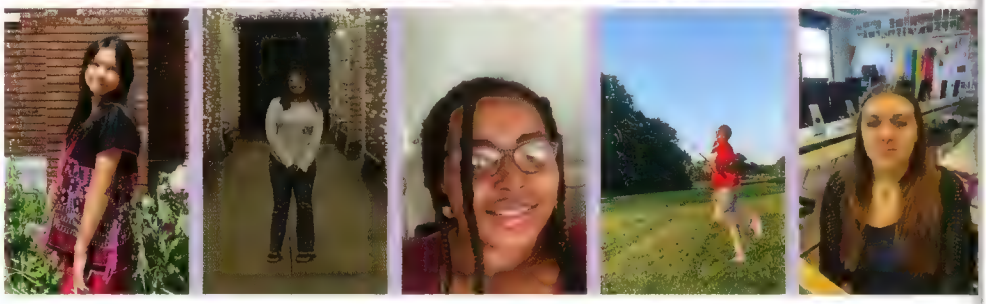
Brayden Kirzeder
Leah Kitterman
Asta Kizungu
Coltin Klossing
Joseph Kososki
Mu Phlay K'Tooe Soe
Demanii Kumari

Hser Mu La
Shianne LaFrancois
Kyla LaMonte
Aiden Lannen
Jolena Lannen
Connor Latcham
Ja'Tia Lee

Brody Lenger
Yessenia Leos-Ochoa
Damian Lessard
Swavay Lewis
Tavarias Lewis
Abbagale Lieber
A'rion
Lonergan-Shinskia

Kaitlyn Long
Richard Long
Jessica Lopez
Juanita Lopez
Natalie Lopez
Daisy Lucio
Jaxson Lydon

IN MY Junior ERA



"I'm in my embracing my culture era."
- Ywa Htoo

"I'm in my slaying era."
- Nevaeh Hunter

"I'm in my academic era."
- Jayla Johnson-Coleman

"I'm in my fisherwoman era."
- Eh Eh Poe

"I'm in my confused era."
- Lillian Reid

Harper Maloney
Leek Maiual
Isabella Marceleno
Yadier Marceleno
Jillian Martin
Matthew Martin
Xylynn Martin

Gerardo Martinez
Olivia Martinez
Kayla Mathews
Hunter Mau
Kevin Mayares
Dai Shaun McCaw
Terrence McClay

Alice McConchie
Elizabeth McCoy
Lillian McDaniel
Kamya McDuffy
Bella McNanna
Emma McNanna
Jaleeyah McNeal

Nevaeh McQuay
Maliyah McVay
Yazmin Medrano
Kyleigha Mejia
Kylie Melchi
Karina Mendoza
Amiya Merrill

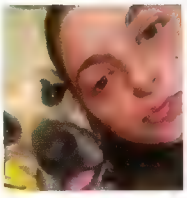
juniors' FUR-ever friends

Reagan Hawotte
"Sadie is 5 years old, and my favorite memory is when she tries to steal my socks."

Morris Nunn
"Rocket is 6 months old, and my favorite memory is taking him to Starbucks, and getting him a pup cup."

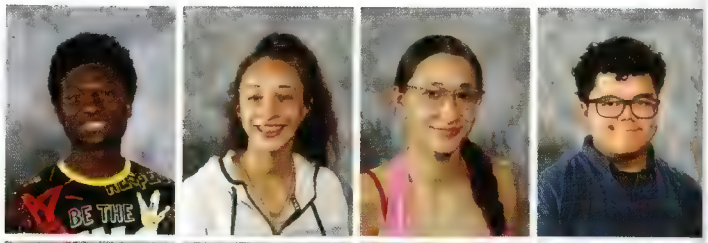
Jozie Kerr
"Bogey is 13 years old, and my favorite memory with him is his first car ride to get Atomic."

Aundrea Doss
"Rocket is 5 months old, and my favorite thing about him is how clueless he is."



Maddie Carroll
"Blue is 2 years old, and my favorite memory with her is when she chased my sister around the yard, with a chipmunk in her mouth, and my sister wouldn't stop screaming."

Marcel Merritt
Abigayle Mildren
Gabrielle Mildren
Rilen Miller



Bruce Mills
Gianna Mills
Namira Mirzai
Abdul Mohammadi

Marhaba Mohammadi
Justin Moline
Jose
Montoya-Hernandez
Ku Ku Moo

Caden Moore
Tobi Moravetz
Ja'Unique Morgan
Gueliano Morrow-Criner

Anocled Munezeru
Dulce Murillo-Mendoza
Jaliyah Murray
Bernard Musafiri

Masudi Mwanuke
Elijah Nadeau
September Naing
Baila Nees

Alexis Nelson
Landyn Nelson
Emmanuel Neville
Carla Nieto

Niyonzima Niyonzima
Angelina Nocentelli
Grant Nolan
Kyle Nombre

Mohammad Nooristani
Morris Nunn
Machozi Nyassa
Emily O'Brien

Jake Osborn
Abigail Owens
Dylan Panick
Antonio Parker

Janiah Parks
Poe Soo Paw
Harley Payney
Christian Pearson

Gladys Perez
Isaiah Perez
Juana Perez Morales
Zee Phares

Angelika Piasencia
Eh Eh Poe
Brian Polanco-Guzman
S'Nya Pollard

Isaac Potenzo
Hangama Qubadi
Samir Qubadi
Aimal Rahmani

Ja'siah Rainer
Pedro Ramirez
Dreshawn Randolph
Lillian Reid

Teliaja Reimolds
Jhovana Reyes
Breana Reymer
Layla Rice

JUNIOR SPORT SUPERSTITIONS

"I have to wear my hair in a bun, no matter the hairstyle. Otherwise, I know I'm gonna do bad."

- A'rion Lonergan Shinskia

"Whenever I swim at a meet, the Speedo wording on my cap has to be in the back."

- Lizzie Shorten

"I always put my left shoe on before my right."

- Carson Banks

"I have to listen to country music, or else I play bad."

- Jake Osborn

"I like to do the same hairstyle whenever we play Moline."

- Maddie Carroll

"I wear the same belt with every uniform."

- Chase Curry

"I always write Proverbs 3:5 on my wrist tape."

- Grant Stewart

"I wear different sliding shorts with every uniform."

- Grace Vidmar

Lyric Rice
Temyiah Richardson
Daniel Rivera
Milca Robles
Linda Rose
Amir Ross
DeShawn Rucker

Nevaeh Rucker
Presley Ruffner
Brian Salas
Jose Salinas-Pelaez
Olivia Samuelson
Ku Say
Hanifullah Sekandari

Zarifullah Sekandari
Trinity Sepulveda
Marz Sersig
Jerrilin Shadden
Khu Say Shee
Tanyah Shelton
Mylie Shook

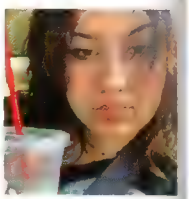
Lizzie Shorten
Beline Shukuru
Braden Smith
Logan Smith
Santana Smith
Valerie Smith
Hsa Soe

ENERGY DRINK ENTHUSIASTS!

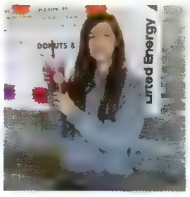
"My favorite energy drink is 'Squatch' from Lifted in Moline. I like the drink because they use a different base from everyone else, and I think it tastes really good."
- Elaina Adlfinger

"My favorite energy drink is 'Sour Patch' from Atomic in Rock Island. I like it because of the pomegranate flavoring. Any drink with pomegranate is my go to, but mainly 'Sour Patch'."
Whitney Stivers

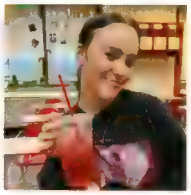
"My favorite energy drink is just a 'Simple Blue' from Atomic in Rock Island. I like how bold the blue raspberry flavor is."
- Chloe Harmon



"My favorite energy drink is 'Blue' from Atomic in Rock Island. It is the only drink I get strictly because it's blue, and it tastes like blue raspberry."
- Jo Cambell



"I like Galaxy from Bowlyou's in Milan. It's the first one I tried, and I mostly like it because the baristas are really nice."
- Karli Barker



"My favorite energy drink is strawberry with pineapple from Atomic in Rock Island. I like that it is sweet, but slightly sour and fruity, at the same time."
- Kamya McDuffy

"Apples to Apples from Atomic in Rock Island has my heart. I like it because it's really yummy."
- Daisy Lucio

Bahati Songolo
Omar Sosa
Logan Spawn
Ariyah Spoljoric
Grant Stewart
Whitney Stivers
Merrick Stockwell

Skylar Stone
Sophia Stout
Eh Kant Su
Eh Tahe Ta
Paul Tabb
Amya Tate
Amariyana Taylor

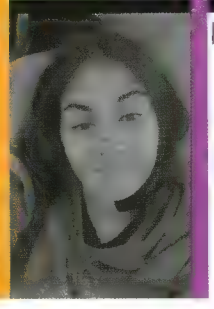
Faviana Teneyuque
DaMarie Terrell
Ryleigh Terry
Cydney Thomas
Canyon Thompson
Jaida Thompson
Natalie Thompson

Payton Thompson
Jeremiah Thornton
Kyle Thrap
Charlotte Toyi
Lineth Valverde
Kaleb Vancoillie
Christian Varela

I'm in my Debut Era.

" love older Taylor Swift songs, and i grew up listening to Debut."

- Jaida Thompson



I'm in my Reputation Era.

"It has a nostalgic feel."

- Andrea Garcia-Gallegos

I'm in my Reputation Era.

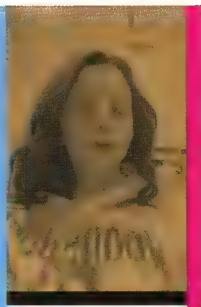
"I feel like I am making a reputation here at Rocky, by being involved and helping others."

- Isabella Adner

I'm in my 1989 Era.

"I'm in the best era of my life."

- Cristina Aleman



I'm in my Fearless Era.

"I relate to getting back up and fighting for what you want, over and over again."

- Remi Engeland

I'm in my Reputation Era.

"Her idea of her 'taking back her reputation' after a lot happened in her life is very meaningful to me.'

- Mia Hixson

I'm in my Folklore Era.

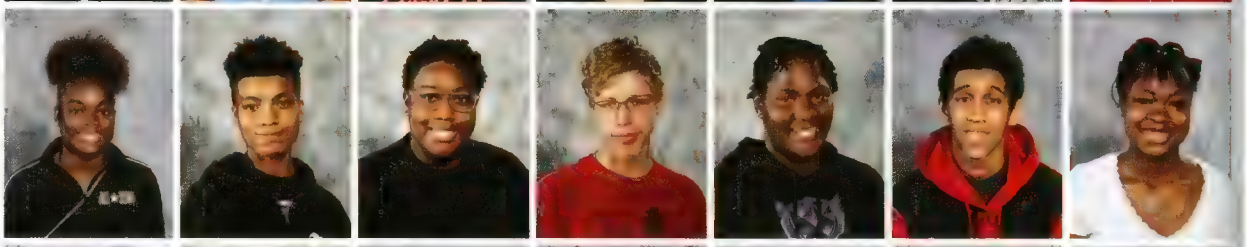
"I'm at peace with myself but I'm also always wondering was life has to offer."

- Elizabeth McCoy

I'M IN MY ___ ERA

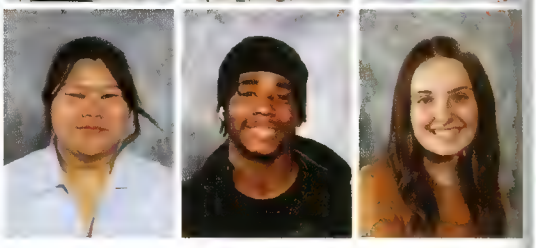
Chauncey Vaughn-McBride
Riziki Venansia
Elijah Venegas
Grace Vidmar
Josiah Wages
Davion Walker
Kevion Wallace

Keviona Wallace
Alexander Walls
Jada Wells
Tyler Whipple
DeAvion Williams
Jayden Williams
Kiana Williams



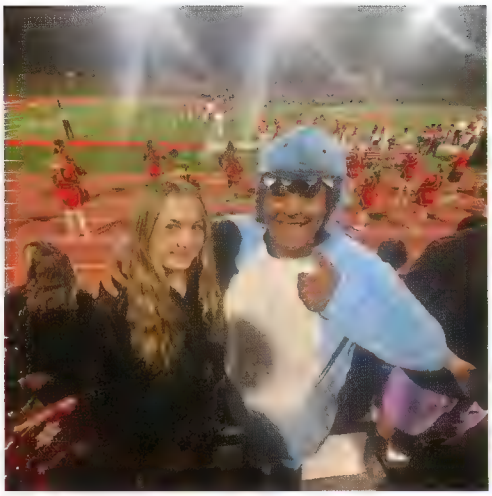
Emedi Wilondja
Malingumu Wilondja
Yose Wilondja
Chandra Woods
Davion Woodson
Noah Wright
Jamaya Yancey

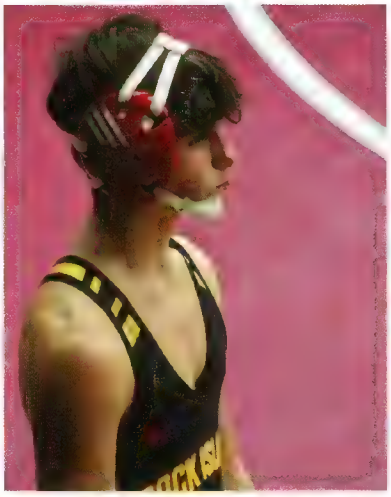
Tway Tway Ye
Laron Young
Miranda Zeroth



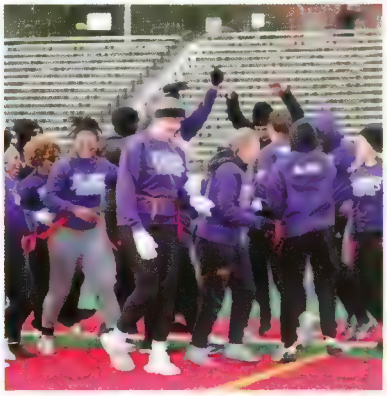
RIHS ARTISTS

in ceramics





Rocks
15



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"Transitioning to here from middle school gave me a chance to explore new subjects, make new friends, and discover different interests. It helped me take on more opportunities and prepare for the future, as well as step out of my comfort zone and embrace the changes. It has impacted my mindset, and helped me grow and mature. In all, coming to Rocky has helped me realize less is more, and that there is only room for improvement."
- Honesty Vesey

"Coming to Rocky has helped me find myself and my passion. It has been an amazing experience for me to prepare for my future. It has helped me make new friends and join clubs. I have grown, learned, and made good memories. But more importantly, I have stepped out of my comfort zone. Rocky has helped me become the person I am today".
- Yazmyne Martinez

"I've always been excited for high school because of the things I knew I'd experience, and had waiting for me. As an incoming freshman, things were amazing, but discovering that high school wasn't all sunshine and rainbows, it helped me mature and grow as a person, a student, and an athlete. All that I've been through since I've come to Rocky has helped me further find myself, and made me acknowledge the things I need to be, to be the person I want to be in the future."
- George Tate

our GROWTH

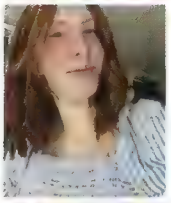
Our growth over our first two years at Rocky is clear. Our strong bonds, loud spirit, and supportive ways are what make us Rock Island Rocks. We are halfway through our time at Rocky, but as we progress through our high school years, we know we will only improve.

THE CLASS OF 2026

"More than anything else, this class is more of a challenge."
- Evan Regur

"It's a lot of work, but you're going to be fine, as long as you stick with it."
- Zach Hansen

"It's very hard, and much more pressure, and different between the various classes."
- Bella Wilson



"It's a lot more to tackle than I expected."
- Ulana Richey

"At the start, it was super stressful because I didn't know what to do, and it's a lot of weight, if you have extra-curriculars."
- Haleigh Laud

"It's enjoyable, but stressful due to the studying."
- John Htoo

"At the beginning, it is stressful and intimidating, but after getting used to how things are, it gets easier."
- Abigail Dillard

"Being in a classroom at a college level is an excellent opportunity."
- Tamina Gunasheva

"It's a bit difficult, at first, but when you do your work and read the textbook, you will get a better understanding, and the class will become easier."
- Merrell Mars

Ndayishimiye Abia
Martha Abuke
Jennifer Aguilar
Kizungu Abadhare

Pedro Alba-Garcia
Kaden Allen
Kampbell Allen
Alexandra Alva

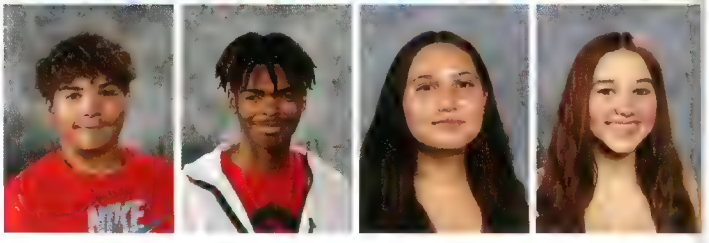
Elena Alvarez
Dante Anderson
Alex Arredondo
Malaysia Arrington-Mentria

Laura Avalos
Annabelle Avegnon
Moe Moe Aye
Jean Babwiriza

Wilondja Bahininwa
Ashley Balcazar
Gavin Barber-Morgan
Lauryn Barker

Cooper Barnes
Dylan Barrell
Kaitlynn Bartelt
Logan Behrens

Ka'Zaria Bell
Mason Bell
Keni Bennett
Scarlett Bennett



Brock Berger
Isaiah Bester
Tiffany Billings
Elaina Biswell

Eric Biswell
Samuel Bizimana
Ameerius Blaser
Payton Boemecke
Nytrell Bommon
Isahella Bostic
Vanessa Boswell

Landyn Bowker
R'Eannah Bowker
Amauri Bradley
Da Nai Jah Bragg
Ayden Braud
John Britton
A'Brielle Brown

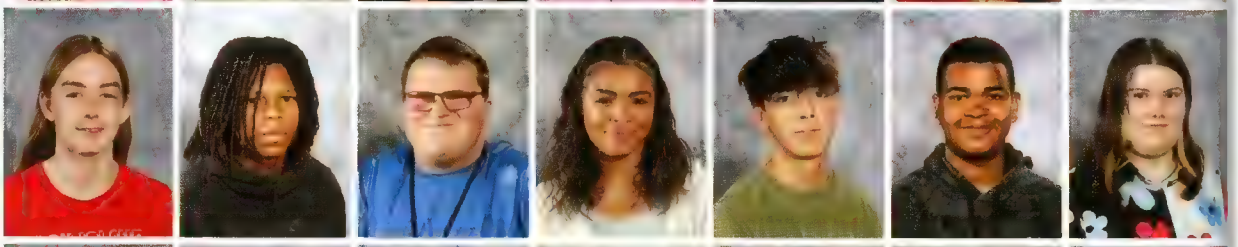
Gregory Brown
Jada Brown
Kamrhen Bryant
Nicholas Buckwalter
Abriana Bullock
Olivia Bunch
Alexander Burgmeier

Shila Burns
Christah Butler
Rihanna Butler
Exayra Calderon
Thalia Camacho
Ash Campbell
Ryder Carothers

SPORTY sophomores

Iphe Carr
Keegan Carroll
LaRayah Carroll
Christopher Castaneda
Marco Castaneda
Tatiana Castillo-Cisneros
Azucena Chavez

Uriah Chenoweth
Ricky Childs
Alex Clarke
Devyn Clay
Alexander Clemann
Xavior Colclasure
Lincoln Conger



D'Milo Conner
Teegan Conwell
Alice Cook
Bayisenge Cornelio
Kylie Cortez
Lily Coulter
Lucas Crandall

Isabella Crane
Trey Cunningham
Makayla Curry
Nevaeh Daugherty
Andrew Davis
Jacquelyn Davis
Kylan Davis

SOPHOMORE Styles

"I really like my blue flare leggings and my Nike shirt."
- Jenna Kitterman

"I like my red sweater and my blue jeans. The belt pulls it all together, too."
- Sell Lei

"My most fire fit is my red sweater with my tan cargo pants."
- Neima Rogers

"My favorite outfit I have worn to school is when I wore my green Sublime shirt and my black pants, with my green shoes because it was my first day back outfit."
- Merrell Mars

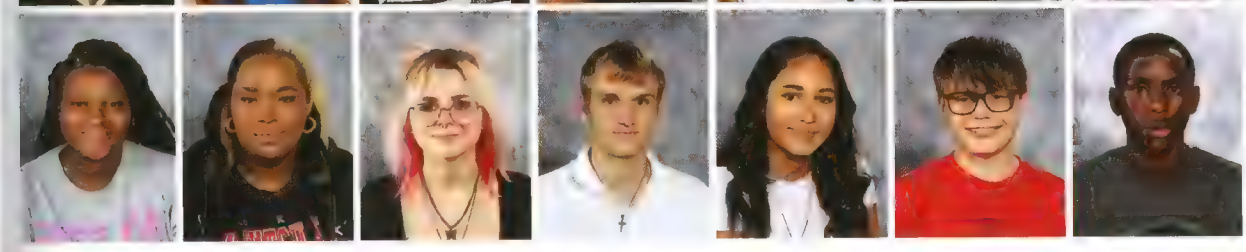
"I really love this outfit because I think the low rise pants are so cute, and I love how sleek and neutral colors look together."
- Claire O'Hern-Maidak

"My favorite outfit is my red tank top and my black sweatpants, with my red Jordan 3's."
- Eric Biswell

Adam Dawkins
Imajah Day
Maya Decker
Mariah Deemer
Delaney Dempsey
Himari Dennis
Ivyonna DeRoin

Abigail Dillard
Korie Dillard
Jack Docherty
Mason Dohogne
Natalia Dominguez
Aubrey Doss
Youssif Doukoure

Nevaeh Dove
Ailiene Downing
Parker Drish
Harmony Dunbar-Franklin
Patient Ebengo-Mchumbe
Admyar Eddings
La'Taijah Eddings



Ronchelle Edwards
Justice English
Lola Ennis
Bryce Ericson
Jersey Everson
Dominic Eygabroad
Mugisha Ezekiel

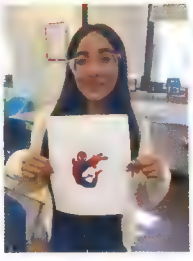
"Iron Man because he's rich and smart."
- Elaina Biswell

"Spider-Man because he's cool and saves people from villains, and he has a good physique."
- Angelo Mojica

"Spider-Man because I can swing around, or Doctor Strange because then I could control time."
- Daniella Leahy

"Easily, Spider-Man. He's such a real type of superhero. Most iterations of Spider-Man are just him struggling with his personal life and hero life."
- George Tate

"Spider-Man because he can swing between trees, and I want to jump off buildings."
- LaRayah Carroll



"Spider-Man because he can climb walls and hang upside down."
- Thalia Camacho

"Captain America because he's basically invincible, and he has big muscles."
- Aubrey Massie

Aria Faqiri
Shoaib Faqiri
Quinn Feigley
Michael Fentress
Riziki Fikiri
Camryn Fineran
Nolan Fonteyne

Tauren Foster
Helen Franco
Kasee Frantz
Mason Fry
Ladavia Funches
Zamaria Gadlin
Jose Garcia

Maricela Garcia
Griffin Garro
Sophia Garza
Alayna Gay
Amine Gay
Millie Gidaszewski
Braden Gilliland

Arakaza Godstone
Abraham Gomez
Isaac Gomez
Matteo Gomez
Conner Goodwin
Madelynn Greenwood
Katherine Gummow

STRESSED SOPHOMORES

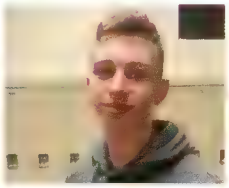
Sophomores explain how they handle the pressure of sophomore year as athletes.

"How I handle my stress? Well, I just mostly sleep things off, or if it's grades, I just keep in mind I can just do better on my test and any big learning opportunity grades. Any type of stress I have from bad performance, I just keep in mind it's all a learning process, and takes time, just like school, so I just try to take it day by day, and get better during practice, and keep a mostly positive mindset about everything. and how things will eventually turn around."
- George Tate

"As an athlete at RIHS, how I cope from stress from my sport would involve time management, getting rest, and being n a peaceful state of mind. With time management, I make sure I get all my homework done, even on busy days, and staying on being a student before an athlete. Getting rest real y resets me, and gives me that peaceful state of mind."
- Ka'Zaria Bell

"Handling stress in a positive way is pretty hard, especially for athletes here at Rocky, but I've learned that when things get stressful, to just take a break, and focus on other activities, while also thinking about what ideas I can use to make the situation less stressful."
- Ayden Braud

"I just try to be relaxed, and not too stressed about school and other things during sports because I know if I need help with any work, my teachers are always willing to help, especially the ones that played sports themselves."
- Daniella Leahy



"I turned stress into excitement, because the feeling of being nervous is the same feeling as being excited for something, but when I have back to back games, and I'm missing class, I would normally get my work for those days early."
- Kasee Frantz

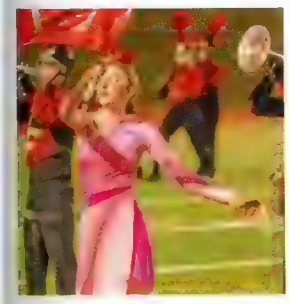
"When I am stressed or overwhelmed with school or work, I take a minute to breathe and find a calming distraction. Sometimes, it can be hard juggling sports and schoo , but it's much easier with a positive mindset."
- Francesca Guyette

Tamina Gunasheva
Francesca Guyette
Emilio Guzman
Hector Guzman-Martinez
Nyasia Hall
Trevor Hamburg
Korde Hamilton

Marvin Hamilton
Marvion Hamilton
Trace Hampsey
Liam Hampton
Zachary Hansen
Avery Hanson
Cameron Hardy

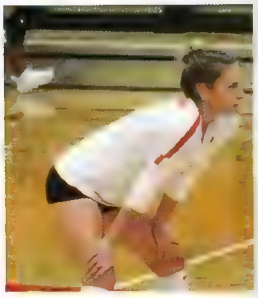
Mason Harl
Olivia Harms
Kendall Harrell
Londyn Harris
Darrionna Harrison
Tyler Harvey
Sahel Hashmatullah

Zaynah Hassan
Emma Helms
Maximilian Hemphill-Salaverria
Cheyan Hiatt
Elijah Hodgett
Raphaella Hodonou
Naasir Horne



"I'm in my student athlete era."
- Josiah Putnam

"I'm in my social era."
- Jackson St. Amand



"I'm in my performing era."
- Audrey Long

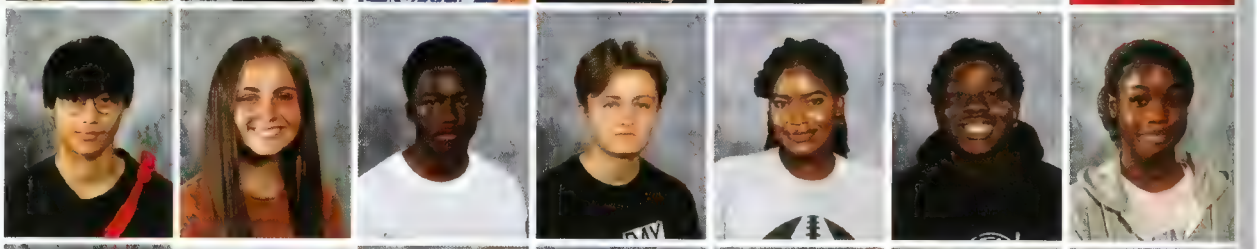
"I'm in my athletic development era."
- Daniella Leahy

"I'm in my volleyball era."
- Izzy Spurgetis

In Our SOPHOMORE ERA!

Olivia Horton
Hunter Hoteling
Sentavious Houston
John Sel Htoo
Kler Paw Boe Htoo
Nelson Htoo
Ni Tha Blay Htoo

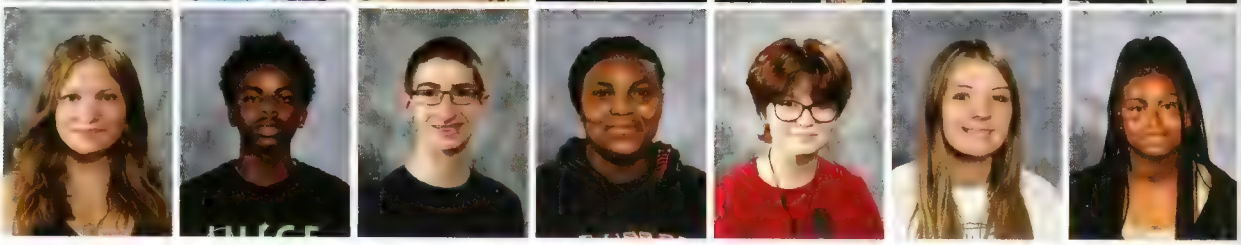
Samuel Htoo
Mallory Hudnall
Temar Hudson
Ethan Ignatius
Bernice Irakoze
Benny Iteriteka
Blessing Jabbah



Aniyah Jackson
Havionna Jackson
Hailey Jacobs
Chase Jared
Alexandro Jimenez
Yaretzi Jimenez
Alyvia Johnson

Samuel Johnson
Zada Johnson
Emmah Jones
Joshua Jones
Matthias Kelley
Alonzo Kelly
Fatuma Keya

Jenna Kitterman
Kessy Kizungu
Owen Klapperich
DeNym Langford
Haleigh Laud
Daniella Leahy
JaMarrie Lee



ROCKS @ STATE

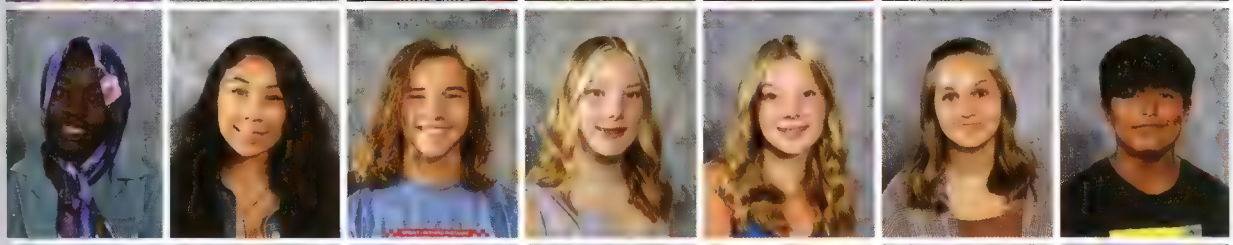
"When I made it to State, I had no clue. I was just celebrating because I had won a very tough match. It wasn't until my coach told my team and me in the van. My team and I just started screaming. The realization really sunk in, and I was ecstatic. The experience was one of the best. I got to see tennis at a higher level, and play at a higher level. It meant a lot having my teammates and my dad there to watch. To even win a match meant so much more. I learned to be patient, and to take every point seriously."
- Neima Rogers

"It meant a lot to qualify for State. Apart from Conference, and maybe with it, that is the biggest focus of the season. So to be able to get there, and have that experience was really fun and felt good. The experience at State was crazy. There are thousands of runners at the meet, and many more spectators. All those people create a really fun environment, and everything is focused on Cross Country, which doesn't happen often. The State Meet helped me learn how to race better. There are so many people that strategy becomes a really important factor, and I did not have a plan for that. Going forward, I will know I have to go into every race with a plan for the course."
- Gabe Mahn

Sell Lei
Kaleigha Lemmon
Agelix Leon
Su Su Let
Devell Lewis
Swaveontae Lewis
Elijah Linton

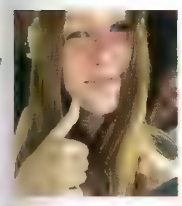
Kylee Littlejohn
Audrey Long
Quinton Long
Sage Lucio
Jack Luebbers
Ronald MacKenzie
Rebecca Maess

Gabriel Mahn
Dax Manary
Alida (Seth) Mapes
Daniel Marceleno
Mari Marisiyana
Merrell Mars
Alicia Martin



Fatina Martin
Yazmyne Martinez
Henry Mass
Alexa Massie
Aubrey Massie
Alayna Mathews
Julyan Mayares

Lucas McCall
Isaac McConchie
Jernariona McCray
Coryon McDuffy
Ian McGowan
Julian McGowan
Justice McGowan

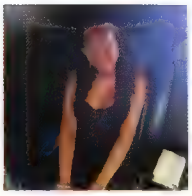


"Taylor Swift."
- Abigail Dillard

"All types."
- Mallory Hudnall

"It depends on my mood."
- Alayna Mathews

"SZA and Taylor Swift."
- Alliene Downing



"Calm music."
- Charisma Pulliam

"SZA."
- Alice Cook

"Taylor Swift, Drake, and Frank Ocean."
- Abigail Stewart

SOPHOMORE STUDY *jams*

THIS THAT

Sneakers or Crocs?
"Crocs are better because they are more comfortable, and easier to put on your feet without tying your shoes."
- Avian Thomas

TikTok or Instagram?
"I like TikTok better because it's fun to learn all the dances."
- Devyn Clay

Atomic or Kick Serve?
"Kick Serve is better because it's not always super busy, and I feel like there's more of a variety of flavors."
- Olivia Nevarez

Ronaldo or Messi?
"Ronaldo because he has way more impact than Messi, and he is just better."
- Samuel Bizimana

Sedgwick or Mr. Hundert?
"When Sedgwick lost the Mr. Julius Caesar competition, he was devastated, however that didn't stop Sedgwick from trying once again after 20+ years had gone by. He shows dedication and stubbornness, which I can relate to."
- Angelo Mojica

Andrew Niemi
Jayce Nissen
Jake Nixon
Gul Nooristani

Chance Nyirakamana
Olivier Obedi
Claire O'Hern-Maldak
Madeline Olson

Emilio Ortiz
Dariyus Osbourne
Jackson Otten
Daniel Owens

Kaylee Owens
Addison Pannell
Chance Parrish
Kale Pattison

Pyran Patton
Naw K'Lu Moo Paw
Michael Payton
Taylor Pedigo

Alexis Perez
Isaac Perez
Jacob Perez
Lincoln Perez

Emily Perkins
Ni Pet
Hope Pohl
Jazmine Powers-Hodges

Brayden Prather
Charisma Pulliam
Josiah Putnam
Fazila Qubadi

SOPHOMORE STUNTS

Cheerleaders explain their favorite stunts to perform.

"Probably, a show and go. It's very flashy, and it's very simple, but cool."
- Alexa Massie

"An extension pop off. I like this stunt because it's kinda challenging for me, and as a base, you have to work together with everyone."
- Avery Hanson

"My favorite stunt to do is my extension one man, because it's really fun to do."
- Lincoln Perez

"My favorite stunt is an extension lib heel stretch, and then pop off, because it is so very fun."
- Francesca Guyette

"My favorite stunt is probably an extension lib and an assisted kick fold because they are fun for me to do."
- Vanessa Boswell

Alissa Quinlan
Mohammad Rahimi
Ja'liyah Rainer
Isaac Ramirez
Jose Ramirez
Marcos Ramirez
Jose Ramos

A Miyah Randolph
Manuel Rangel
Kyson Ray
Evan Regur
Marley Reyes
Benjamin Richardson
Ulana Richey

Maria Rico-Garcia
Olivia Riecke
Adrian Rincon
Anthony Rivera-Perez
Amari Roberts
Amaiah Robinson
Markkus Robinson

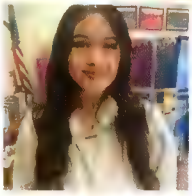
Matthew Roessler
Kelis Rogers
Neima Rogers
Ameena Ross
Esaias Rucker-May
Monserrat Ruiz
Brandon Rush

Edwar Salinas
Makayla Sanders
Ramadhan Sango
Paulo San Martin
Poe Lie Htoo Say
Jayden Schanfish
Austin Schwab

Spirited sophomores

"My favorite sport is futbol, or soccer. My favorite team is América, because it's my family's favorite team, so it's mine, too. I also like the Spurs because they feel like a really funny team. The energy from them is great."
- Abraham Gomez

"My favorite sport to watch is cheer, and the team I cheer on s TGLC because of their awesome technique, entertaining choreography, and sharp moves!"
- Francesca Guyette



"My favorite sport to watch is soccer and football. I love to cheer for the Mexican soccer team, Chivas. Because my dad raised me to watch them with him, and a though we barely win, I always have faith in them."
- Laura Avalos

"My favorite sport is football, and I like the Packers. I really like the players, and think they have really good sportsmanship, which makes the team, overall, better."
- Olivia Harms

"My favorite sport is baseball because I have grown up loving the Cubs, and I have even seen them in person!"
- Tyler Whitten

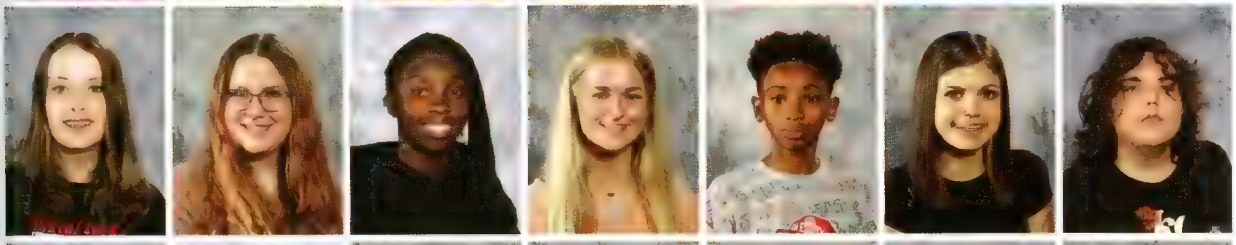
"My favorite sport is baseball, and my favorite team to cheer for is the Angels. They aren't the best team, but they have some amazing players, and a good staff that makes them enjoyable to watch, even if they lose."
- Keni Bennett

"My favorite sport is girls basketball, and I like cheering for South Carolina because they are a really good team."
- Daniella Leahy

Cameroun Sefu
Olivia Seidlitz
Zainab Sekandari
Ethan Shadden
Jaquay Shelton
Poe Sher
Maese Shukuru

Ashley Simmons
Hezekiah Slater
Cardreyon Smith
Levi Smith
Olivia Smith
Eh Dah Soe
Eh Doh Soe

Eh Nay Soe
Hai Nay Soe
Joshua Soe
Isabella Spurgetis
Destiny Stafford
Justin Staley
Jackson St Amand



Hailey Stanley
Sylvya Steele
Ingabire Stella
Abigail Stewart
Xavier Stewart
Nicole Stokes
Miles Stonehouse

Brenden Strader
Chukiwa Sudi
Sidney Sullivan
Kaiden Swanson
Mia Sweborg
Paloma Tapia Montoya
George Tate

Can't Wait To Drive!

"Having freedom, and being able to go anywhere without finding a ride. Also, being able to jam to my music!"
Mia Sweborg

"Hanging out with my friends more, and driving them around."
Kylee Littlejohn

"I'm excited to be able to drive to school, and getting Atomic in the mornings, and not having to get rides from parents."
Millie Gidaszewski

"Getting to go places without my mom taking me."
AJ Johnson

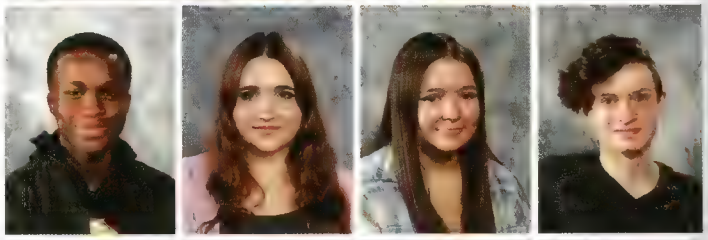
"I look forward to not having to find rides, and going to Chipotle whenever I want!"
Jenna Kitterman

"I'm excited to get my license because I finally get to experience that type of freedom, and I can go drive and watch the sunset after practice."
Alexa Massie

"I'm definitely looking forward to being able to drive myself to Atomic whenever I want, and not having my brother take me everywhere."
Allie Downing

Avian Thomas
Tierra Thomas
Yazmin Tinoco Ruiz
Jaiden Tot

Nishimwe Tresor
Via Tuominen Pawlik
Hayden Vance
Alexander VandeWalle



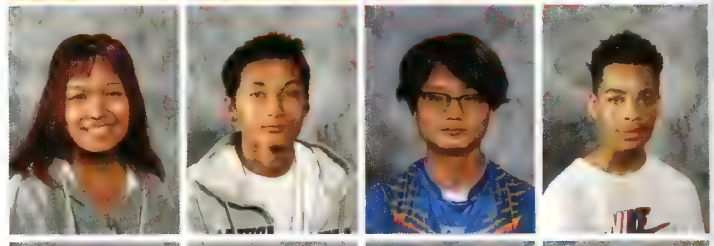
Fernanda Vazquez Chavarria
Alaysha Veasey
Mackenzee Velasco
George Velazquez

Adrian Venegas
Te'Von Venson
Honesty Vesey
Knowledge Vesey

Gracelynn Veys
Martin Villaseca
Christian Villasenor
Katelyn Voss

Averi Vroman
Aimee Vumiliya
Blandine Vumiliya
Meli Vumiliya

Beautiful Wah Eh Wah Tha Eh Wah
Isaiah Walls



Jera Warner
Isaiah Westerfield
Desire Westlie
Parrish Whitacre-Guinn

Tyree White
Michael Whited
Tyler Whitten
Earraya Williams
Nevaeh Williams
Xavier Willoughby
Zion Willoughby

Bella Wilson
Noah Witmer
DeMarro Woodson
Caleb Woods-Stewart
Cole York
Lawson Zulu
Nuam Zuun

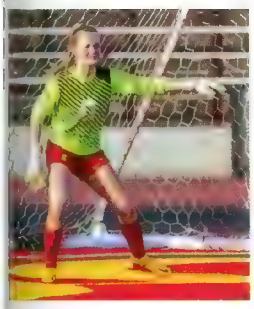
WE ASKED, YOU ANSWERED:

As a Sophomore, how does it feel being an Editor in Journalism?

"Being an editor as a sophomore definitely seems like a lot of pressure, but being surrounded with such great people during class makes the role a lot of fun and enjoyable!"
- AJ Stewart

"Being an editor as a sophomore makes me feel honored, and grateful that I was given an opportunity to contribute more to Journalism. It definitely pushes me to work harder, but it's a great experience for me."
- Kalista Moran

"It feels like a big accomplishment. Going into my first year of Journalism, I definitely didn't expect to be named editor."
- Katie Voss



"Being an editor my first year in Journalism is a big accomplishment for me. It was unexpected, as it is my first year, but it gives me good opportunities to be creative with the yearbook."
- Olivia Riecke

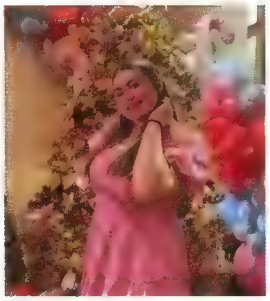
"Being chosen as an editor feels good, considering I'm only a sophomore. It also is cool because that means that I can show my work in a different way."
- Daniella Leahy

sophomore EDITORS

"As it being my first year doing Journalism, it's really cool to be an editor. It's really fun, but at times, it can be a lot of work, but at the end, it's worth it, getting to be a part of the yearbook!"
- Avery Hanson

"It feels cool to be an editor, especially because it's my first year in Journalism. There is more responsibility that comes with it, but I like having that responsibility, and knowing that Mrs. Vens trusts me in what I'm doing, and trusts me to help others."
- Yaretzi Jimenez

"I love to be creative, so being an editor really helps bring out those creative qualities and skills in me. Also, I love being around the people who share the same Journalism ideas as me."
- Alexa Massie

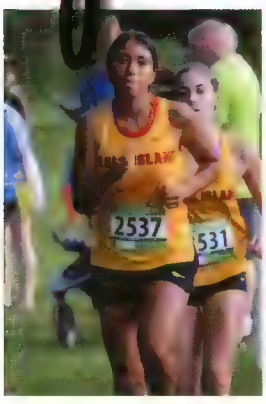


"As a sophomore, getting to be an editor for my first year of Journalism is definitely an amazing experience! It's helped with my creativity and my leadership skills. Being an editor is definitely a great opportunity."
- Elaina Biswell

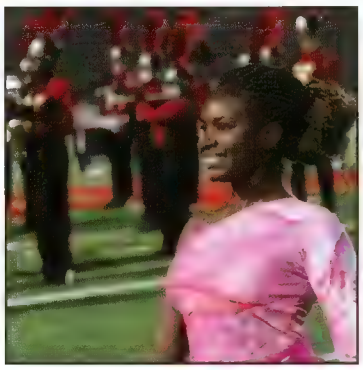
"I would consider myself to be the future of Rocky by being a senior, leading the Volleyball Team to State."
- Sophia Polito

"I consider myself the future of Rocky by being in Student Council to get out ideas that can benefit the school."
- Daenika Adams

our FUTURE



Our future, our dreams, and our goals. We dream of what the future will hold for us. We hold the responsibility of continuing Rocky's traditions. Every moment we make here will turn into our cherished high school memories.



"I will end up being a senior, leading the new freshmen and underclassmen in many ways."
- Addyson Lincoln

THE CLASS OF 2027

Angelina Abarca
Hassan Adamou
Daenika Adams
Jacoby Adams
Jose Aguilar
Nicolas Aguilar
Dreanna Akins

Deshawn Allen
Isabella Almanza
Siryi Amaya
Nathan Anderson
Aab Aoci
Romahn Armstrong
Elijah Arps

Victor Arredondo Lopez
Izabella Ashby
Abanga Asukulu
Elliot Batz
Dylan Baumbach
Hudson Behrens
Maleena Belk

Lily Bleuer
Logan Bleuer
Josias Bolinger
Alaina Bonja
Nataliyah Boyd
Jaeden Breiby-Detert
Terrance Bridges

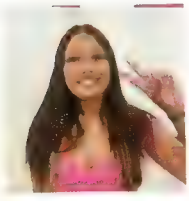
FRESHMEN FEARS

"Grades because I don't want to fail my classes, and miss out on sports."
- Amirya Morales

"Probably getting lost in the hallways, trying to find my classes."
- Demi Robinson

"Failing classes, or just failing, in general."
- Cameron Foley

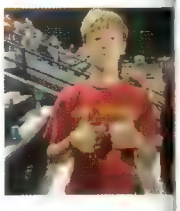
"All the new work we have to do, and how much harder it is."
- Parker Stannke



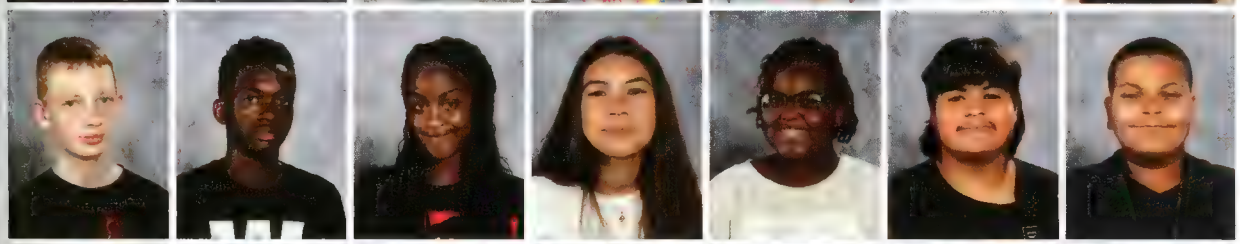
"I was sacred of the difference in the amount of people from middle school to high school."
- Kayden Fentress

"Probably finding my classes on the first day, and getting there on time."
- Madeline Franks

"Losing friends from middle school."
- Addyson Lincoln



Jayden Brooks
Juliana Brower
Devyn Brown
Rodrick Brown
Dy'Marion Bryant
Bennett Buckallew
Marely Bunch



Chase Bunge
Jacques Byabele
Justice Cade
Ana Camargo
Kimira Carter
Anthony Castaneda
Myles Chaney

Ian Chavez
Samantha Chovanec
Justin Cishahayo
Elijah Clark
Kevontae Collier
Adario Colon-Melendez
Ava Combs-Peppmeyer

Keelony Cook
Charles Cooley
J C Cooper
Jonas Cortez
Nestaja Counts-Richardson
Athena Crummy
Brandon Cruz

ROCKING THE RED AND GOLD

"Being in a Rocky sport for the first time has taught me responsibility, and how to follow up with my emotions when I'm overwhelmed. I've grown close to lots of people on my cheer team, and enjoy getting to know every single one of them."
- Sonia Niyogushimwa

"The change from middle school to high school is very different. You face better competition, and you have more kids and new coaches for a whole 4 years. There are new plays and new teammates. I think this will be a good change, and everyone who plays high school football will have fun."
- Brooklyn Roessler

"It's definitely been difficult with taking up my time. The practices are a lot later than I'm used to. I've also had multiple practices at 6 am. Another difficult thing was having to be associated with all the new people, but at the end of the day, it still makes me happy, and I enjoy it.
- Myles Duster

"I think it really affected me, mentally and physically."
- Dylan Juras

"I think doing a sport in a school I'm not used to is difficult. It can get very difficult with how much homework I get for one day. Every day, when I'm going home from sports, I plan out exactly what I want to do."
- Grace Driskill

"Going into my first high school sport was a lot more than I thought it would be, but at the same time, there's a lot more opportunities to connect with the community than there were before, and it has been a bit more challenging."
- Akili Richardson

FRESHMAN *refreshments*

"My favorite drink would be the Fruit Punch from Kickstart. I love the fruity flavor from every sip, which really refreshes me, and gives me energy."
- Lauren Dieudonne

"I love strawberry milk because it's pink!"
- Terriana Lee

"Starburst from Atom c because it's so yum!"
- Hailey Gisi

"My favorite drink is chocolate milk."
- Reyna Skelton

"I like to have just ice cold water. It feels more refreshing after doing something."
- Grace Driskill

"My favorite drink is Fanta because it keeps me energized, and tastes good."
- Jomi McNeal

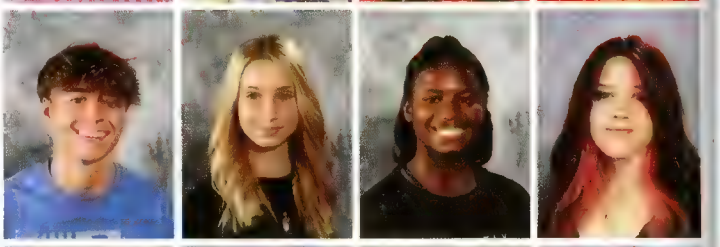
"Either Dr. Pepper, or the Pink Drink, or Cotton Candy from Atomic."
- Emma Tollefson

"Pink Drink from Starbucks, with extra strawberries. It's my favorite because it's just so refreshing, and who doesn't like strawberries?"
- Allyson Newswander

Leticia Cruz Aguilera
Zakyia Dade
Myka Daugherty
Hailey Day

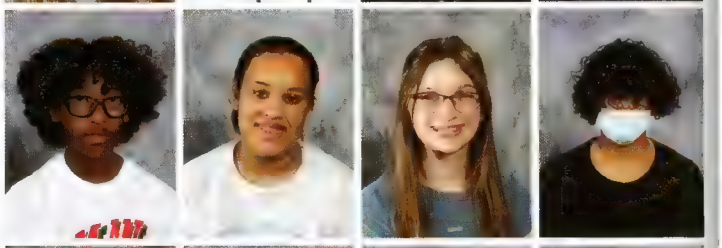
Saveah Day
Nyasia Deemer
Ella DeJonghe
Liam Dennis

Gavin DeRudder
Christi Dickey
Lauren Dieudonne
Giovanni DiGiacomo-Milburn



Alyssa Dillard
Xavier Dixon
Eh Kaw Doh
Kler Moo Doh

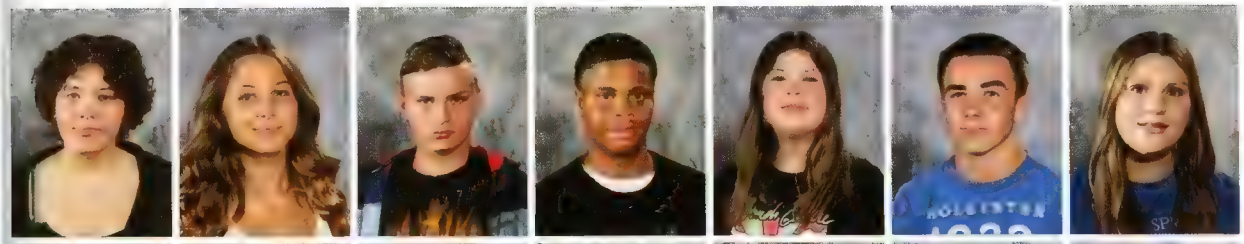
Adam Donaldson
Ava Donaldson
Grace Driskill
Exzavier Dunlap



Myles Duster
Brittney Duyvejonck
Kisubi Ebengo-Texas
Carolyn Eckstein

Lakendrionna Eddings
Hsar Law Eh
Faye Ehrhardt
Calvin Ehrmann

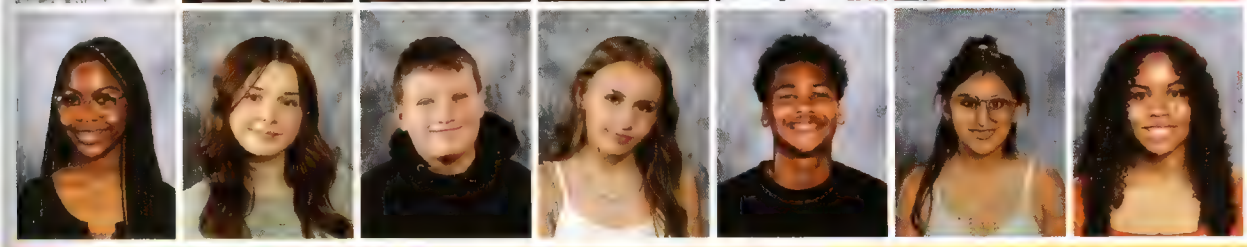
Hudson Elliott
Evan Ellis
Beatrice Emedi
Dayshawn Evans



Rikko Fender
Danikah Fentress
Nicholas Fleuter
King Flowers
Khloe Fluegel
Cameron Foley
Ilisa Fornal

Madeline Franks
Alexis Freitas
Zee Fuller
Kate Galbraith
Ava Gallina
Adonis Garcia
Alejandro Garcia

Jayden Garcia
Santiago Gasca Castaneda
Gabriella Gavarrete
Isabella Gavarrete
Tyler Gerst
Sophia Giesler
Andrew Gilbert



Ericah Gilmore
Hailey Gisi
Nathaniel Gomez
Estella Gordon
Mauricio Gore-Trice
Iliana Granja
Daysia Gray

FRESHMEN

"I like how she makes me genuinely happy, and I can act like me around her."
- Honey Moo

"We always make each other laugh, and match each other's energy."
- Sonia Williams

"I like the way we make each other laugh."
- Emily McCall

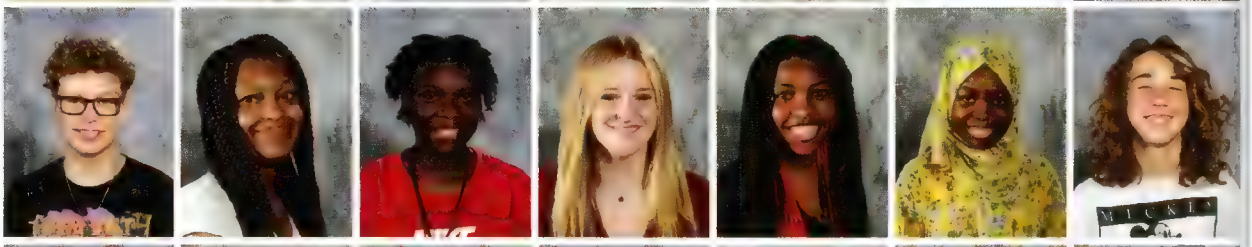
"I like that Emily is funny."
- Lucy Mass

"I like how Say Law is always down to do whatever. She is always caring, and is always fun to be around because of how funny she is."
- Christ Soe

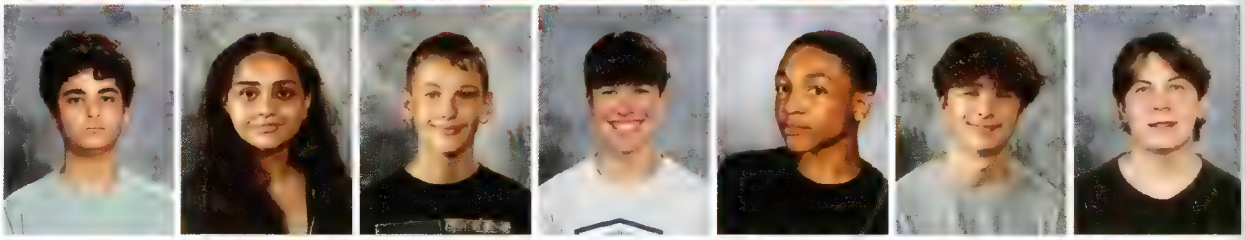
"What I like about my best friend, Christ, is that he matches my energy."
- Say Law Htoo

Kyleigh Green
Du'Maree Griffin
Damillyon Grove
Jessica Gugelmeyer
Martin Guzman
Martin Guzman
Kyleigh Haddick

Ayden Hall
Kamiya Hall
Spirit Hampton
Eliza Hanna
Amari Harmon
Emarion Harris
Dylan Hartzler



Tahir Hassan
Fatima Hatem
Grayson Hathaway
Jase Hawk
Darius Hayes
Kingston Haynie
Peyton Hecker



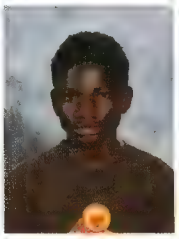
Amelia Heine
Caleb Herrera
Elijah Hicks
Tovy Hileman
Eric Hillyer
A'Travious Hines-Taggart
Micah Hodgett

FRESHMEN TAKE

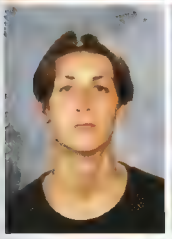
Antwan Hodo
Kierra Hodson
Myaels Hoffeditz
Emily Hoover

Mya Horskins
Mariah Howard
Sandy Rose Htay
Gay Ler Htoo

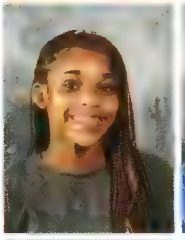
Kler Doh Htoo
Say Law Eh Htoo
Wah Doh Htoo
Alana Huber



Timmya Hughes
Pamella Iliza
Juma Ilungu
Joy-Believer Irakoze



Haydin James
Jaylee James
Tinley James
Asia Jamison



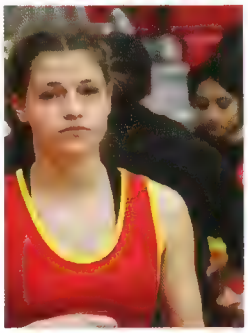
Jeremiah Jamison
Arhianna Jandura
Devionna Johnson
Justice Johnson

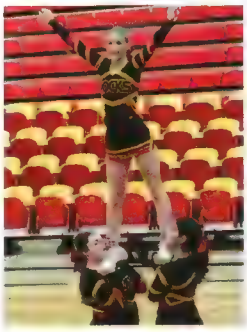
Nadavidya Johnson
Jaiden
Johnson-Coleman
Shane Joseph
Diana Julienne

Dylan Juras
Ayla Kaha
Judah Kargl
Taniya Kelly

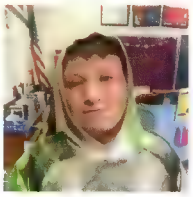
ROCK SOLID

rock solid

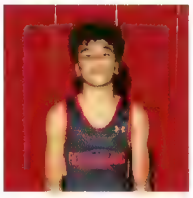




LOOKING INTO THE FUTURE
LOOKING INTO THE FUTURE
FRESHMEN
LOOKING INTO THE FUTURE
LOOKING INTO THE FUTURE



"In sophomore year, I'm looking forward to meeting new friends!"
- Nathaniel Gomez



"In sophomore year, I'm looking forward to earning good grades, getting a good job for my age, and to get better at the sports I love."
- Mason Teague

"In sophomore year, I'm looking forward to Color Guard and drivers ed."
- Lauren Lambrecht

"In sophomore year, I'm looking forward to having a grade comeback."
- Pamella Iliza

"In sophomore year, I'm looking forward to my clubs and my electives. I am also looking forward to not having to be on third floor much."
- Alaina Bonja

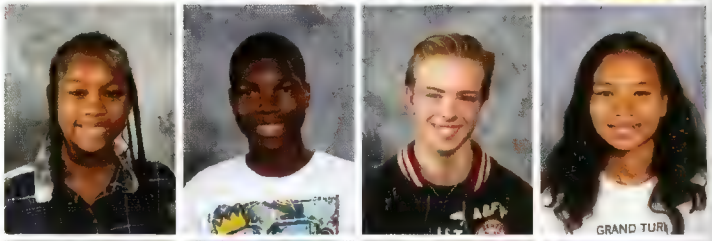
Julianna King
Chloe Kiessing
Maximiliano
Kongkousonh
Rose Moo K'Paw

Tremiah Kraus
Myo Myat May Kyi
Connor Lagaisse
Corneilya Laird

Lauren Lambrecht
DaRazja Langford
Dee Borah Le
Jimmy Lee

Terriana Lee
Tyler Lee
Chase LeMaster
Ja'Kai Lewis

Swaveonna Lewis
Andre Lidell
Zaiden Ligeno
Alice Lin



Addyson Lincoln
Benjamin Lopez Raya
Val Lopez-Ruiz
Sarah Louise

Halle Love
Karley Loveless
Sumaili Lubembela
Kaleix Lucas

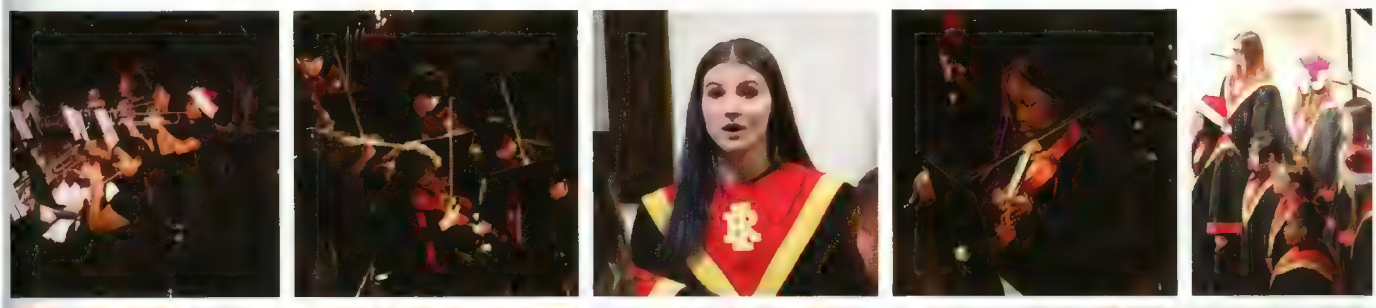
Aidan Lynch
Emanuel Marceleno
Lorenzo Marceleno
Ruby Marceleno

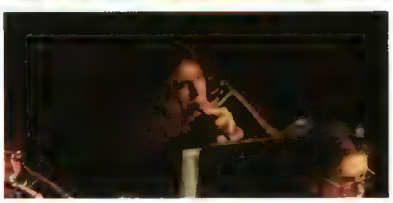
Deven Marshall
Manuel Martinez
Megan Mason
Lucille Mass
Eliza Mathews
Isabella Mau
Javiah Mays

Emily McCall
Jayden McCannon
Damauri McCaw
Devonta McCaw
Emmanuel McClain
Serena McClendon
JaNasia McDaniel

Kylie McKillip
Jaimyiah McNeal
Jomi McNeal
Nathaniel Meade
Justina Melton
Lirely Mendoza
Corey Meyer

Owen Miller
Christina Min
Memphis Minteer
Sanah Mirzai
Anthony Mitchell
Sani Moa
Michelle Monroe





NOTABLE freshmen

Mariana Montoya-Hernandez
Esther Moo
Honey Moo
Nahviyah Moore

Yezabelle Moore
Amirya Morales
Alberto Moreno
Zayden Morris

Sydnee Moseley
Liam Muir
Isabella Murillo
Kesha Neema

Gavin Neff
Allyson Newswander
Josie Nightengale
Sonia Niyogushimwa

Romeo Nolasco
Mohammad Nooristani
Savannah Norman
Erin Norwood

Trevor Nunn
Lorenzo Ochoa
Blanca Olmedo
Jai'Nya O'Neal

Natalie Osborn
Joseph Owens
David Pack-Lewis
Diego Palacios

Ranna Parhar
Maricio Parker
Calvin Parr
Moxxie Paw

Psaw Paw
Ninah Payney
Madalynn Penn
Deandra Perez

Jose Pizano-Alba
Sophia Polito
Nathan Pothoven
Trenton Prather

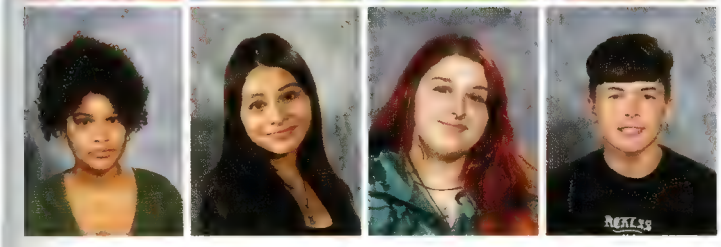
Logan Pribble
Grayson Putnam
Jordyn Randle
Natalee Rasmussen

Nalia Ratcliff
Sage Ray
Kylee Raygor
Angel Reyes

Akili Richardson
Yavela Richey
Dakota Roarks
Krystal Robbins

Romel Roberts
Aliyah Robinson
Demi Robinson
Na'Kaliyah Robinson

Noah Rodriguez
Susan Rodriguez
Brooklyn Roessler
Jonathan Rogers



Teresa Rogers
Abygail Rosales-Elias
Hailey Rosenbaum
Dakota Rosenberg

PRACTICE MAKES PERFECT

'27

"Being in Chamber Choir, in general, feels very nice since it is the most prestigous (choir) group. Being a freshman in the group is even better, due to the small number of freshmen that make it, and the fact that I am able to socialize and perform with classmates that are older than me."
- Nathan Anderson, Chamber Singers

"Being one of the youngest in the group is something that I'd never say is actually helpful, but it kind of is. I have so many older classmates, who've attended Rocky longer than me, that I can ask help from. It's really fun to perform with them, as well, and simply be around the group!"
- Marley Smith, Chamber Singers

"It feels good to be a freshman in Chamber Choir. I really enjoy singing with the amazing and talented students in the Chamber Choir!"
- Christ Soe, Chamber Singers

"Being in Chamber Orchestra, as a freshman, is cool. I like bragging about it. It's also not as hard as I thought it was going to be."
- Susan Rodriguez, Chamber Orchestra

"I am really enjoying Rocky's Theatre Department! I have really enjoyed acting alongside my talented peers, and our amazing tech crew. I have made so many new friends and memories, and I can't wait to see what I do next."
- Alaina Bonja, Theatre

Amari Ross
Michael Ross-Cespedes
Travion Ruff
Angela Ruiz
Carlos Sabino
Brodee Sandoval
Ywa Tar Hay Say

Destinee Schappert
Madelyn Schrempf
Allison Schweickhardt
Elena Sefu
Samuel Senatra
Jayden Severs
Jules Shema

Cameron Shine
Carmello Shine
Chance Shook
Sofia Sierra
Reyna Skelton
Amiyah Smith
Ka'Liyah Smith

Marley Smith
Ava Snyder
Christ Soe
Julianna Soe
Elianna Solis
Bertha Songolo
Emma Stadler

INSPIRING INSTRUCTORS

Lucy Mass
Mr. Rogers
"He doesn't believe in homework, and he's very funny."

Judah Kargl
Mr. Williams
"He is an amazing teacher and coach. He gives us the best ways to help us understand what we have to do."

Honey Moo
Ms. Gonzalez
"She makes math fun, and she's a good teacher, who's patient, and helps without getting mad."

Samanta Amaya
Mr. Figgs
"Because he is funny, and helps you when you're confused, and because he's such a vibe to be with."

Syndee Moseley
Mr. Behnke
"He's a very fun teacher. He's very outgoing, and makes the class fun. He also hands out pickles to the class."

Liam Muir
Mr. Williams
"He's a good coach and a good teacher. He gives great advice to his students."

Sonia Williams
Mrs. Trimble
"She is really good at making it so that when you don't understand something, you can get the best understanding possible. She has a good sense of humor and makes class as fun as possible, and she is able to connect with her students."

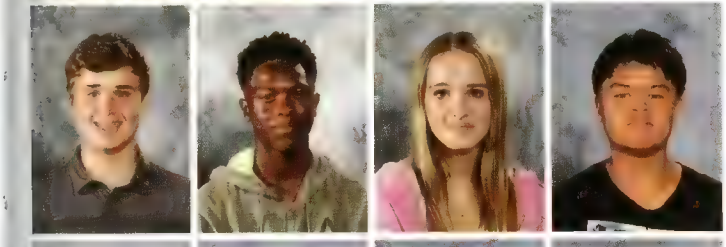
Madison Stadler
Jaicob Stalkfleet
Parker Stannke
Aye Star

Rowan Stockwell
Living Stone
Olivia Strandberg
Jalyssa Strickland

Lumande Sudi
Logan Summers
Allegrah Sutter
Keagan Swain

Samuel Tarr
Emiya Tate
Eh Taw Taw
Mason Teague

Valentin Teneyuque
Serenity Thomas
Lucas Thornburg
Darnell Thornton



Aiden Tinney
Messiah Tinsley
Emma Tollefson
David Ton

Koltin Truschke
Nola Turner
Kayden Vales
Anthony Vilar Cedeno

Quentrelle Vivians
Payton Wade
Amiah Wakeland
Courtney Walls

ROCKS OVER RIVALS

Junior high rivals reformed to Rocks create new bonds and show more talent.

"In a way, it's relieving to have such great players on the team from Washington, but it's also weird to be playing with the people we were determined to win against last year. I've already made connections with some of girls."

Estella Gordon, #9

"We are able to work well together, and it's better than when we were on separate teams because our skills are better combined. I wouldn't say I've made new friends, but I've grown closer with the ones I already had from Washington."

Allegrah Sutter, #14

"It's definitely different from playing against these girls, to now, playing with them because we shared that competitive aspect to win against each other. I feel like I've met a lot of new people, and made new friendships through playing with them as as team, and it makes it more fun that we can."

Addyson Lincoln, #12

"Playing on a team with the girls we called our rivals last year is fun. We all came together, and just work together really well. We make a great team."

Ava Peppmeyer, #8

"I never really think about this any more, but it's fun. The chemistry we have makes it feel like we were always a team."

Deven Marshall, #10

"It was weird switching because I didn't know all of the people on the team, but now, I have a valid relationship with all of them."

Damauri McCaw, #33

"Being on the same team as the people I considered my 'rivals' for the past two years is really not as bad as I thought it would be. I feel like when we combined, our team became a lot better than what it already was because the boys realized we could actually do good on the field, leaving the 'rivalry' behind. Seeing everyone so often has helped me gain some of the strongest friendships and bonds I have."

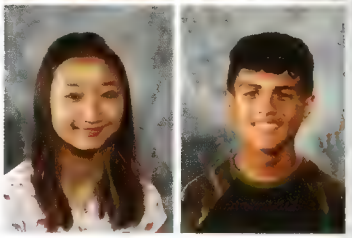
Cameron Foley, #34

Raymond Watkins
Casey Westerfield
Payton White
D'Masiah Williams
Giryah Williams
Jalani Williams
Maziyah Williams

Mmembe Wilondja
Nunda Wilondja
Larry Wilson
Jayden Wilson-Angel
Quinn Witcraft
Ava Wolfe
Janelle Woods

Takais Wright
Alexander Wulgaert
Kevin Yeater
Blake York
Deante Young
Kaelah Young
Ngurinzira Yusia

Paw Eh Ywa
Isai Zetina

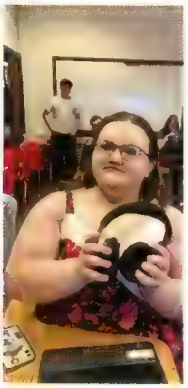


FRESHMAN essentials

"My Beats."
- Addyson Lincoln

"My chromebook."
- Fatima Hatem

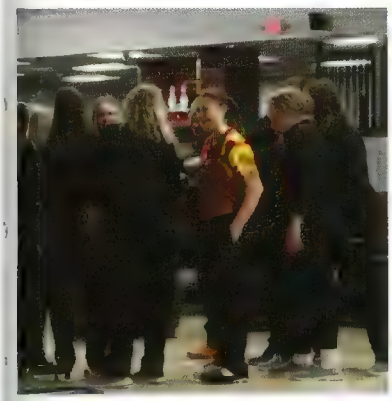
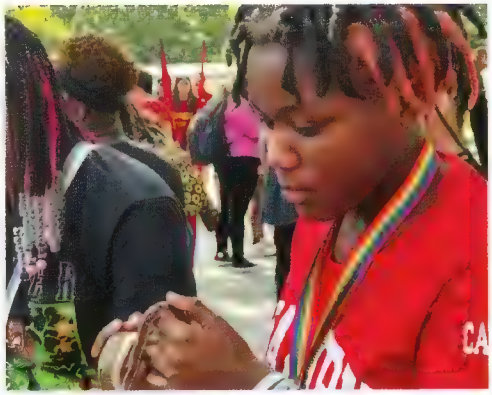
"Air Pods."
- Amirya Morales

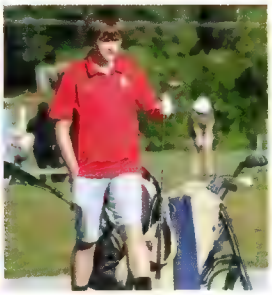


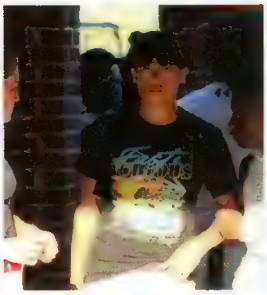
"Personally, I bring my headphones."
- Sage Ray

"My phone or ID."
- Honey Moo

"Just my Air Pods."
- Allison Schweickhardt





"To help students realize they can be scientists, despite what anyone may say. I want to always have a fun learning environment, where students feel comfortable."
- Mr. LaRoche

"I believe in the amazing potential of the kids in our community. I feel that responsibility to do my part in supporting them, nurturing them, and encouraging them to live the life they want to live."
- Mrs. Anderson

"I like making a difference in lives, and there are a lot of different kids and personalities, and a lot of kids are going through different things. Knowing I could be a difference in their lives brings a smile to me."
- Mr. Tubbs

OUR PASSION

Our passion for Rocky can come from many places. Some of us are Rocky grads, and some of us found our way here through a job search. However we reached the Rock, we found our place here, and a passion for helping Rocky students feel just as at home in these halls as we do. Our journey to the Rock differs, but our passion to make this place better remains the same.

RIHS & TMLC STAFF 2023-24

Dawn Aimone

Craig Allison

Lorelei Andedo

Lori Anderson

Lori Angel-Young

Julie Arnold

Cassey Attebery

Anna Bacon

Meagen Baker

Janey Batterson

Lawrence Behnke

Kimberly Bell

Emily Bohling

Mark Bollaert

Megan Braun-Howard

Chris Britton

Tim Burbridge

Andrew Campbell

Pete Carlin

Jon Catterton

Jennifer Chewning

Julie Churchill

Chalondra Clark

Tim Corwin

Dan Coyne-Logan

Sue Crowder

Amy Curtiss

Erin Dempsey-Rohr

Katie Dennis

Stephanie Dieudonne

Charles Driscoll

Keith Dunker

TEACHING *with pride*

Wonderful kids deserve a great teacher.

After only 3 years at Rock Island High School, Mr. Robert Mwaga has made quite the impact. In the midst of the COVID-19 epidemic, Mwaga found his way to Rocky, followed later by his brother, Brian. Mwaga said his favorite teaching memory, so far, took place in one of his classes. "Last semester, I worked on a name story project with my students. I was touched when my students learned the power of names, and how central our names are to our identities. The students also shared that they will work with other people to help them learn their names and name stories. The students learned the need to be intentional with learning other people's names," he explained. In the midst of every trial teaching offers, Mwaga holds the dreams and passions of his students in high regard. The Mwaga brothers moved to the United States for great opportunities, and now, they give their students just that every day.

Jeff Duster

Anthony Duytschaever

Christina Dyer

Scott Dyer

Kelly Edgerton

Nick Eli

Mike Emendorfer

Tina Eygabroad

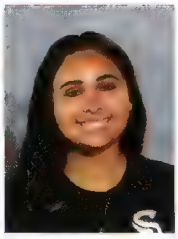
Lavill Figgs

Dori Foster

Johnna Gamble

Janice Gbenyo

Koffi Gbenyo



Valeria Gonzalez

Yolanda Grandberry-Pugh

Andy Gray

Michelle Greenwood

Bill Gustafson

Tech Guy

Andrew Hains

Anne Haman

Tonya Hanrahan

Jennifer Johnson

Katie Hartzler

RIHS Security

Connie Hayek

Destiney Hearn

Jessica Hernandez

Thad Hoover

Nicole Hubbs

Karolyn Ingle

Meaghan Jackson & Jennifer Wendland

"I grade at my house. I need a quiet environment. I usually need a snack, like goldfish, animal crackers, or popcorn. I also like energy drinks or coffee."
- Ms. Gonzalez

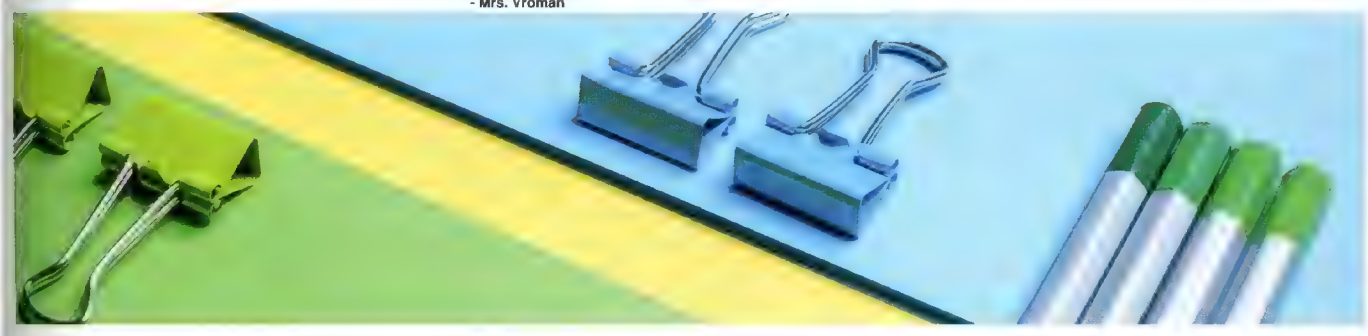
"My must haves are a quiet place, which is either my kitchen table, or desk during my prep period. I also need coffee to keep me going."
- Mr. Campbell

"I have to have colored Ink Joy pens, and purple is my favorite color to grade with. I grade on Saturday mornings, with a cup of Costa Rican coffee, in front of a window that faces my backyard."
- Mrs. Vroman

"My Stanley !!! :)"
- Miss Munday

"My tunes!!! :)"
- Mr Tubbs

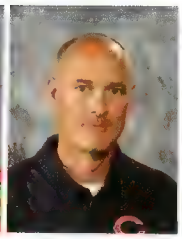
grading MUST HAVES



Shanley Resch

Haley Jarrin

Jackie Harms



Troy Joseph

Chad Kennelly

Ben Kirgan

Jason Kitterman

Cameron Kotovsky

Susan Lanning

Chris Laroche

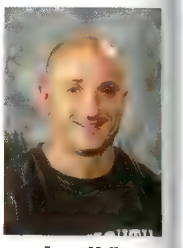
Cortez Lee Rogan

Kris Martens

Trish Matson

Cheryl McClendon

Sean McCollum



Aaron McKay

Mike Melody

Mary Mendelin

Katie Mertel

Mike Mertel

Patty Mewes

Meghan Miers

Janna Miller - DeBecker

Dawn Mlekush

Audrey Moody

Tammy Morgan

Stacey Morrell

Melody Mote

Mackenzie Munday

Brian Mwaga

Robert Mwaga

Briana Nelson

Tari Nevener

Bill Osmun

Melissa Owen

Andrea Parer

Tia Parker

Julie Pearson

Kelly Preston

Norma Ramirez

SURPRISING *staff* STATEMENTS

"I am very religious. . am a hardcore Catholic. Most people who look at me or know me would assume I am not religious at all, especially being a goofy physics teacher. Most people feel I do not fit the 'church going' characteristics."
- Mr. Laroche

"Students would be surprised to know I got married at 19 years old."
- Mrs. Davis

"Students would be surprised to find out I play Dek Hockey."
- Mr. Kennelly

"I've traveled in 100s of modes of transportation including a hot air balloon, segway, gondola, monster truck, helicopter, in the back of an ambulance, in the front of police car, trolley, ski lift, and many more."
- Ms. Attebery

"Students might be surprised to know that I worked for the National Council of English, MAYTAG Communications, and an engineering firm."
- Mrs. Pearson

"Students might not know that I met the host of the Today Show."
- Mrs. Vens

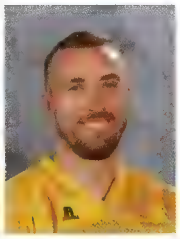
"I accidentally drove a get-away car."
- Mrs. Anderson

Willie Randle

Nicole Regan

Stacey Rel

Mickeala Jimenez


Marty Resner

Kate Reyhons

Dail Rice

Douglas Roberts

Steve Rogers

Derek Ross

David Schriefer

David Sebben

Elizabeth Shaffer

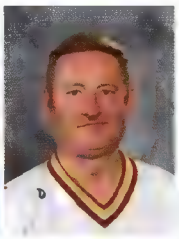
Travis Shepherd

Jennifer Sims

Demetriyone Singleton

Shavonne Singleton

CJ Smith


Courtney Stone

Lily Tewksbury

Justin Thies

Nathanael Thompson

Shawn Trask

Dan Trenary

Maria Trigueros

Carmen Trimble

Jen Trimble

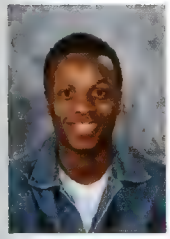
Isaiah Tubbs

Steve Van De Walk

Kim VanKirk

Angela Vega

Kyle Verschorre


Ramsey Vesey

Scott Voigt

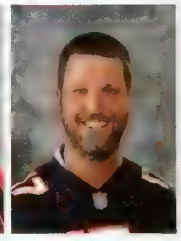
Jacob Vroman

Laurie Vroman

O'Nita Watkins-Harris

Jay Wayland

Qiana Wells


Jeff Whitaker

Jarrin Williams

Kia Wilson

Kelly Young

Paula Zigler

Sarah Vens

THAT'S MY *best* FRIEND

- Mrs. Jarrin & Mrs. Resch

- Mrs. Regan & Ms. Ramirez

- Mrs. Dennis & Mrs. Vroman

Senior Night

Sectionals

"The pride for playing a sport comes with showing up and showing out with my milestones."
- Keziah Anderson

"Play for what's on the front of your jersey, and not what's on the back. I always have loved that saying because it's true that you are playing for the team, and not yourself."
- Conner Dilulio

"Playing a sport at Rocky has helped me to develop Rocky pride by bringing me closer to the people on my team, making me more competitive, and giving me more school spirit."
- Gracelynn Veys

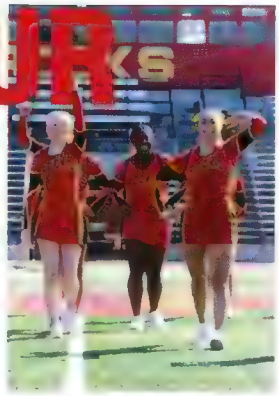
our PRIDE

If there's one thing Rock Island Athletics does well, it's pride. Whether it's a rival match-up, Regional decider, or Conference Championship, Rocky athletes never fail to play for the name on their front- and are proud doing it.

"For winning or losing, let our goal be loyalty to old RI."

ROCK ISLAND ATHLETICS 2023-24

OUR way



"Our way is giving it our all, no matter what."
- Lincoln Perez

let's CHEER

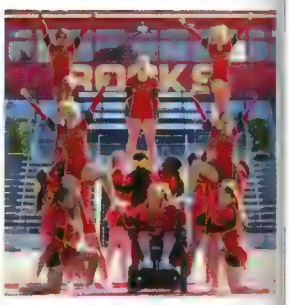
The 2023 Football Cheer season was a tough one. There were weather extremes, beginning with blazing hot temperatures, to ending with freezing, rainy nights. However, the team persevered, and showed their passion through it all.

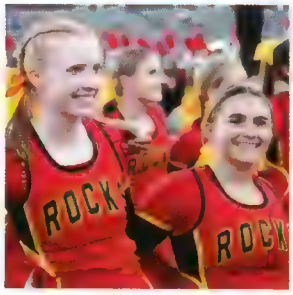
The season began at the end of the previous year, with tryouts in May. Then, there were practices throughout the summer, and the cheerleaders attended UCA Camp to further their learning, as well. The first football game the team cheered at was the Red and Gold Game in early August, and the season lasted until the end of October. Senior cheerleader, Josie Driskill stated, "I feel the season went very well. We learned how to work really well together, and we did a lot of cool, fun stunts." It was a grueling, time consuming season, but tons of fun. Coach Mackenzie Munday agreed, stating, "Overall, I think this season went well. I saw improvement each and every game, which was all I could ask for."

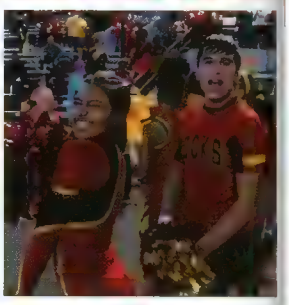
With the sport comes many traditions. Another senior cheerleader, Cecilia Padilla, explained, "After every game, we would do our 'We Are Proud Of You' chant to support the football players. For Homecoming, we decorate the locker rooms for the football players, and every home game, we walk in the parade to welcome our team to the field, and to support them." There was tons of support within the community, and the cheerleaders only added to that. Coach Munday also said, "Here at RIHS, we are known for following tradition when it comes to our cheers. We always start each game and the 3rd quarter with 'Go Big Red!' It is a tradition we will continue to follow."

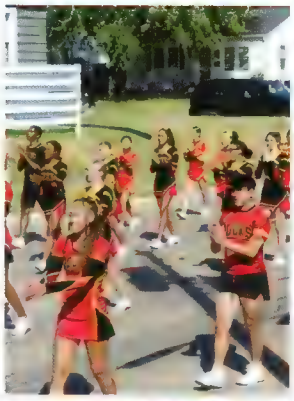
Some favorite memories from the seniors include, "The team dinners during Homecoming practices," stated Driskill, "and Senior night!" added Padilla. Coach Munday enjoyed, "Watching all 3 squads win first place at UCA Camp over the summer." Coach Patricia Gallegos shared that her favorite memory was, "The Rockridge cheerleaders helping Ceci be able to get her new wheelchair."

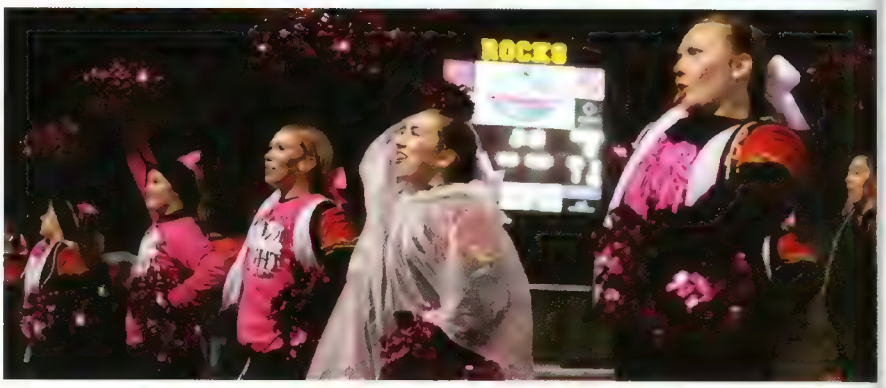
Overall, the Football Cheerleading season was a hit. Even if there were some challenging times, the team pushed through and persevered. The team and the coaches are very excited to continue their passion for the sport next season, and continue to cheer on the Rocks!











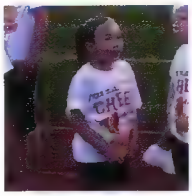
VARSITY squad

JUNIOR VARSITY squad

FRESHMAN squad

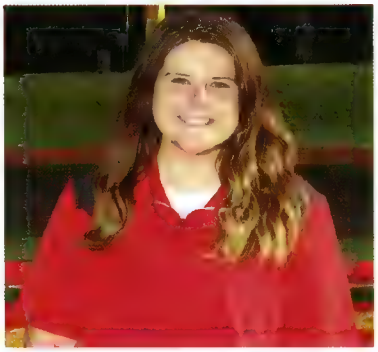
SENIORS

Then and now

Josie Driskill		
Jade Gasper		
Cienna Reed		
Eva Essman		
Brenna Anderson		

behind the SIDELINES

"I would say my coaching style is democratic. I give my cheerleaders an opportunity to contribute and provide input. We, as coaches, set the framework and teach the skills to create a positive team."
- Coach Gallegos



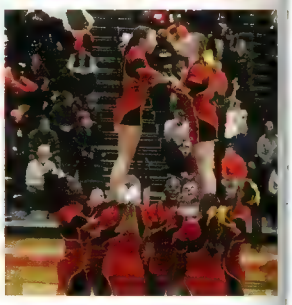
"At the end of the day, the goal of a cheerleader is to spread positivity and school spirit. So, as a cheer coach, my coaching methods involve creating a positive and supportive environment."
- Coach Munday

CHEER SPIRIT

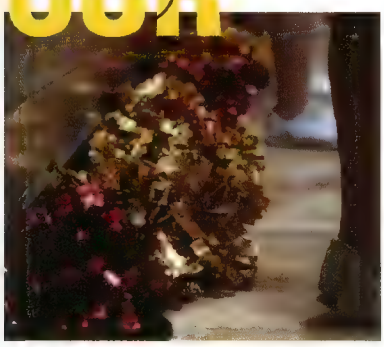
"Rock Town Spirit shows support from the crowd and student section because it draws in attention, and shows that we come together as one to cheer on our team."
- Isabella Adner, Junior

"I feel like our team gets closer because we get to know each other outside of cheer, and it is great for team bonding."
- Eva Essman, Senior

"It allows me to still experience being a part of the student section in a way, and have fun with my classmates."
-Teegan Conwell, Sophomore



OUR way



"Team. A team is uplifting others and having teammates' backs, on and off the sidelines."
- Alexa Massie

PEBBLES TURNED ROCKS

"Being on Varsity as an underclassman has its pros, like learning from the older girls really helps boost my confidence, knowing I am doing it right, but also, the encouragement they provide is unmatchable."
- Alexa Massie, Sophomore

"I feel like being an underclassman on Varsity has taught me to be a better leader. It also made me a better cheerleader in being able to do more difficult stunts and cheers!"
- Vanessa Boswell, Sophomore

"Being an underclassman on Varsity feels rewarding because the work you put in at home pays off. It does get difficult, at times, because I feel the pressure of keeping up with the upperclassmen."
- Lincoln Perez, Sophomore

JV

2023-2024

VARSITY

NEW LOOK *new vibe*

This cheer season was full of new and exciting changes. New bonds were made, and Coach Emily Witherspoon led the team in style, as she stated, "I like to remind our athletes to have fun. There are times when it is okay to be silly and laugh. As long as everyone is safe and trying their best, that is what it is all about!" Karli Barker believed that the bonds the cheerleaders make on a team are most important, stating, "Trust is important when we stunt, and it just makes the experience overall better."

ROCKS ENCOURAGING PEBBLES

With a new season means another kids' camp! The RIHS Cheerleaders love inspiring and helping the younger kids learn the skills and hard work that you have to put in to be a successful teammate and cheerleader during their future cheerleading experiences.

SENIOR *night*

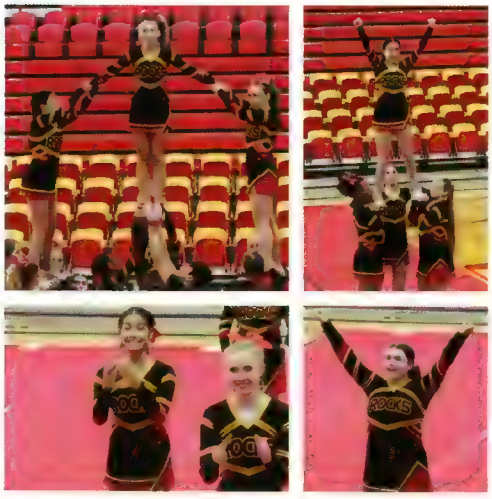
Rocks win against the UT Panthers! 58-46

Senior Night is important because it celebrates the seniors moving on and leaving their mark. This is the first year where both teams have been combined into one routine. With this new experience came some struggles, like having late night practices, as well as juggling games for both teams and regular practices. While the coaches gave them creative freedom to make the routine, it made both teams unite as a whole. Overall, the experience was unforgettable for the cheerleaders.

"We all work together, stay focused, and try our hardest, even when times are hard."
- Avery Hanson

"I try my best to always put my best foot forward, but I'm not perfect. I try to be a good person, and do what's right. I can only hope to be a positive influence on my student athletes, and be a person that they look up to."
- Coach Gallegos

"My favorite memory from this season was teasing the athletes' ponytails, and seeing whose ponytail I could make the highest."
- Coach Emily



"I think the season's going well. Everyone's been working really hard, and even under stressful circumstances, we've all been able to hold it together, and do our best, no matter what. It's definitely been hard with all the practices, on top of other practices and games, but it's all worth it!"
- Teegan Conwell

ROCKS ARE TOUGH

For this year's Competitive Cheer Team, Coach Emily Witherspoon and Coach Patrica Gallegos kept positive energy throughout the whole season by reminding the athletes to just have fun, and it didn't matter what place they got. "I like to remind our athletes to have fun. It is not about winning first place. There are times when it's okay to be silly and laugh. We can't control everything, and as long as everyone is safe, and trying their best, that is all I ask for," Coach Emily explained.

The athletes have worked all season on their routine, so when it came time to perform, they experienced a variety of emotions, ranging from pressure to excitement. "We feel the pressure and adrenaline our athletes feel, when wanting to make sure our stunts hit and no one gets hurt. It is also filled with excitement, as it is so rewarding to see our athletes succeed on the mat," Coach Emily stated.

Coach Gallegos looks for more than just good athletes when she picks her team. She explained the qualities she looks for in members of the Competitive Cheer Team, stating, "Perseverance, good work ethic, physically and mentally tough, and great showmanship." With the competitive program being fairly new, many of the athletes have never competed before. "We compete against schools who have had comp teams for over 20 years, so it can be intimidating! We are still learning the ins and outs of the comp world, but each week, we show up and do our best, and that's all I ask for!" explained Coach Gallegos.

SENIORS

Senior Captain Alex Jackson has big hopes for this season, expressing that he's "looking forward to getting the team ready, and pumped for tournament and meets."

- Alex Jackson

OUR way

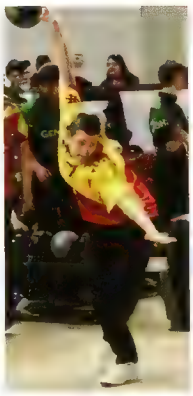
"Staying focused, humble, and having a strong mind is our way of becoming the best team out there."
- David Axnix

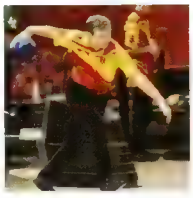
THE ROCKS ROLL to the top.

The Rocky Boys' Bowling season rolled to a close, with an almost undefeated season in dual matches.

Seniors dominated the team, with more than half of the team being seniors this year. Coach Rod Tapscott reflected, stating, "Our team will definitely have a split in it, but we are prepared to move on, and come back strong."

The Varsity Team was able to qualify for Sectionals by placing 2nd at Regionals, which was held in Morton. Although the boys fought hard, the team did not qualify for State. Not only will their season's success be remembered, but the team will miss the amazing seniors, who have continued the pride and passion of the Rocks.





OUR way

"The Girls' Bowling way is being a good friend, being consistent, being loud, and showing your team spirit, always."
- Bailey Sholl and Chloe Harmon

ROLLING INTO

our season

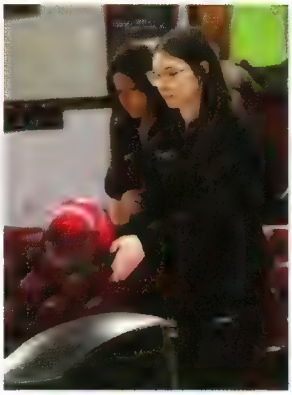
The Girls Bowling Team had a challenging start, with more than half of the team being new to bowling. However, the girls pulled through, at the end, with everyone showing great improvement.

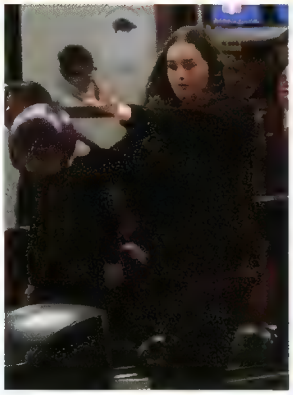
The team leaves behind lots of memories, along with friendships. Getting to know each other was the most important aspect this year. Strong bonds created a safe environment for everyone on the team.

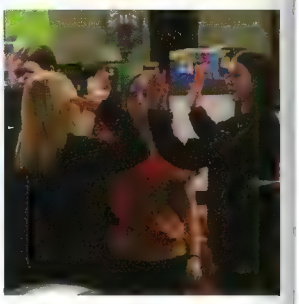
Along with having new bowlers, the team also had new coaches, Jen Sholl, who was previously a JV Coach for the team, stepped up to become the new Head Coach. Kelsey Freeman, who previously bowled for Rocky, took on the position of being the new JV Coach.

Coach Sholl reflected on her experience with having a new team, saying, "It was a year of new beginnings, with new bowlers and coaches. We have come a long way, and still leave room for improvement. I can't wait to see what next year brings." Though having a new team was challenging, Sholl holds hope for the future.

As the Girls Bowling season rolled to a bittersweet close, the team looks forward to what next season will bring.



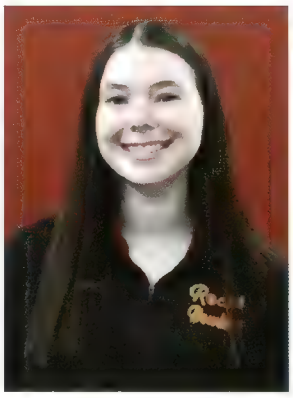




team CAPTAINS

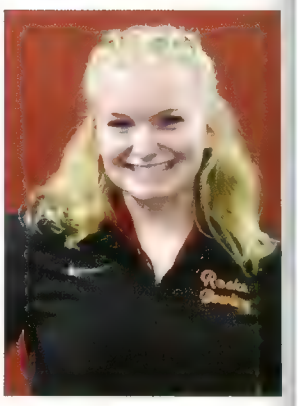
"Being a Team Captain with Chloe is very exciting, since we do everything together. I hope to leave an impact on the team, while motivating others to be the best that they can be, while having fun."

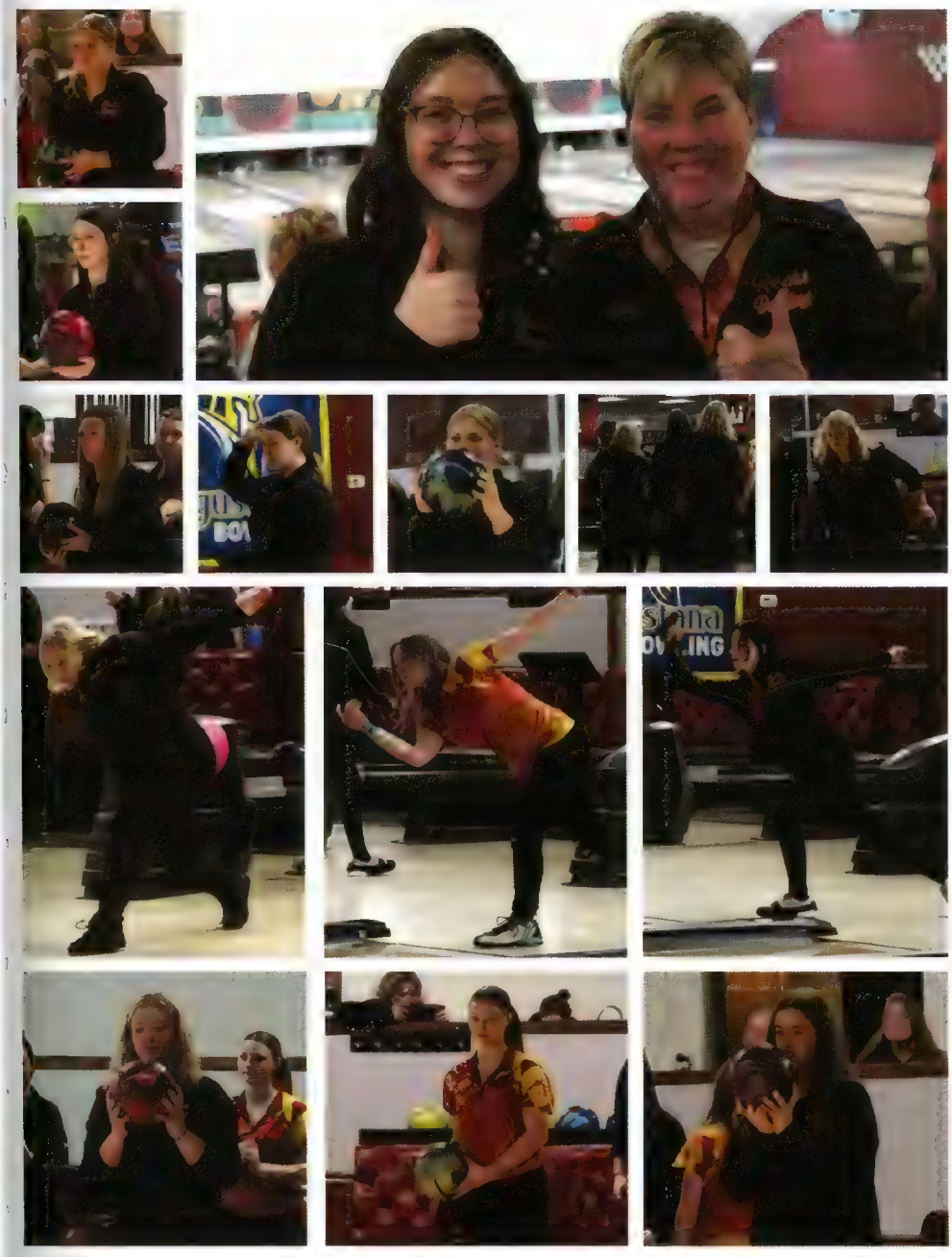
Bailey Sholl, Sr.



"I'm excited to be a Team Captain with Bailey. I can't wait to uplift the new players, and create everlasting friendships this year."

Chloe Harmon, Jr.





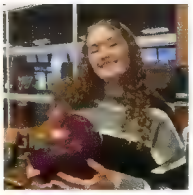
THIS season

- Rock Island Invite - Home
- Galesburg - Away
- St. Bede - Away
- Palatine Invite - Away
- Geneseo - Away
- United Township - Away
- Moline - Away
- Sterling - Away
- Geneseo - Away
- Prospect Invite - Away
- United Township - Away
- Galesburg - Home
- Moline Invite - Away
- Moline - Home
- Geneseo - Home
- Guilford Invite - Away
- United Township - Home
- Sterling - Home
- St. Bede - Home
- Dixon Invite - Away
- Dixon - Home
- IHSA Regionals

NEW experiences

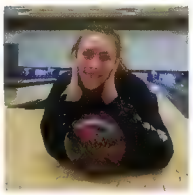
"My favorite part of being on the team is probably making new connections, and trying something new that's fun."

Mia Sweborg, 10



"It's a new thing for me to do. I enjoy the learning aspect of getting better, and also the fun we have, as a team."

Dylan Frantz, 11

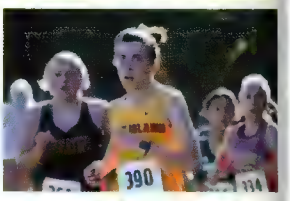


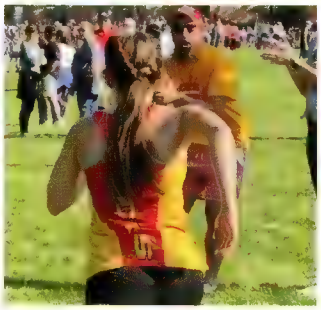
"I like the atmosphere. Whether I am doing well or not, there are always people being supportive. It is also really easy to get along with others."

Kylee Raygor, 9

"Learning to improve my form and becoming more accurate has been my biggest learning experience."

Madz Hendrickx, 9





"Just getting to know all the girls on the team."
- Sydnee Moseley

"Getting to hang out with the team, and just being with the team because they are really awesome."
- Lucy Mass

"Meeting all of the new people - that's been fun. All of the seniors - I'm going to miss them. Just being around them is so fun."
- Courtney Walls

"My favorite part is the race, and when you finish, and feel relieved, and you feel proud of yourself and the team."
- Justice Johnson

"Having fun and running fast."
- Natalie Osborn

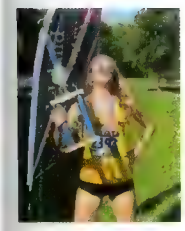
"My favorite part is team dinners."
- Samanta Amaya

"My favorite part was team dinners and making memories."
- Sonia Williams

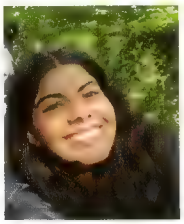
"My favorite part about being on the team is meeting new people and making new friends, and pushing myself to do better every meet."
- Amelia Heine

racing AGAINST time

"My favorite memory has probably been either running in the rain, or going to Sectionals with my team (and beating Geneseo). One of the things I will miss are all of the team dinners, where we connect, not just as a team, but also as a family."
Eva Essman, 12



"My favorite memory will probably be late night pasta dinners before Conference and Sectionals. And, I will miss running with my favorite people."
Norah Wright, 12



"My favorite memory from cross country is running with dogs from the animal shelter. One thing I will miss is the team bonding during team dinners."
Maryam Alhamdan, 12

"One of my favorite cross country memories, though there are so many, goes back to my freshman year. We were at our home cross country meet at Longview Park, and it was Senior Night. One of my teammates had on a banana costume, and our whole team went for a warm-up jog, blasting music. That was one of the first times the team felt like a family, all of us laughing and singing together. I don't know what I will miss the most. Probably, the people. I love our team and coach so so much! I don't want to leave them."
Mary Stockdale, 12

OUR way

"On the Girls XC Team, we always arrive on the course prepared to run. After the race, we have fun and celebrate together. We are all close with each other, and celebrate each other's victories!"
- Mary Stockdale

running STRONGER together

The Girls Cross Country Team, this year, had another great season! From their camaraderie, to qualifying for Sectionals as a team, this group has had a great run.

Senior, Norah Wright, explained the season, stating she was, "Very proud of how we performed as a team this year." The team had an impressive season. They qualified for Sectionals as a team in the 3A Division, after formerly being in 2A.

Making it to Sectionals as a team was a really big deal, and a very exciting moment for the entire team. Wright explained this, stating, "I think it showed that we can really do anything we put our minds to - especially because we didn't make it last year as 2A to State, and we were all pretty bummed about that, but the fact that we qualified in 3A as a team to go to Sectionals is pretty amazing." Transitioning from 2A to 3A was a big jump that brought with it many challenges for the team, but made qualifying together that much more special. Coach Williams also shared about the challenge of being in 3A, saying, "I knew getting bumped to 3A was going to be a new challenge, but these ladies wanted it. They wanted to get as far as they could as a team. They felt the excitement of qualifying the previous year, and they wanted to do it again." Together, as a team, these ladies were able to overcome this challenging transition of switching divisions.

Running at Regionals brought the inspiring news that the team's season was not over yet - that they would be moving on to Sectionals. "It was really awesome! I knew we had it in us, and I think it was great because there was a lot of doubt on our team, and it was just a matter of believing in ourselves, and it was just also amazing because we had all gotten a PR (pretty much the whole team), and it was just miraculous that we all PR-ed in that race," Wright stated. Considering all of the girls that competed at Sectionals achieved a personal record while there shows that their hard work and dedication paid off, which was reflected through their exciting season. Coach Williams shared, "The season was one of my most exciting. I knew this group of girls had the ability to be great, and they did not disappoint. They put in the work, they supported and lifted each other, and they had goals to be great. Ending the season with every runner at 3A Sectionals, having personal best times running with the fastest in the state, it can't get much better than that."

From pasta dinners to training together, the team grew in strength and in togetherness, which helped them achieve many of the goals set for the team this season. Wright shared, "I would say my team goals were to have everybody connect with each other, and create that family atmosphere on the team because I just feel like it is really important with a smaller team, like cross country." As the connections grew, so did the team's endurance and power, fulfilling both of the goals set for the team. Coach Williams shared, "My goal for the team was to make it to Sectionals, as a team."

The Girl's Cross Country Team had a wonderful season, full of exciting moments that have made lasting memories. The girls are sure to continue their success into their next season.

OUR

"I feel that our way of succeeding is always supporting each other and working hard at practice every day, and not getting down when we lose."
- Cody Wolf

"Lucien has played tennis for much longer, and has well developed tennis strokes (forehand, backhand, serve, slice, lob, etc.). He hits with a lot of topspin, and is a very consistent, competitive player that competes at a high level."
- Coach Gabany

"Tyler and Ethan were the most improved players because their tennis game continued to progress throughout the season. They played their best tennis at the end of the season, at the Conference and Sectional Tournaments."
- Coach Gabany

most IMPROVED *on the court*

BOYS TENNIS

Boys tennis

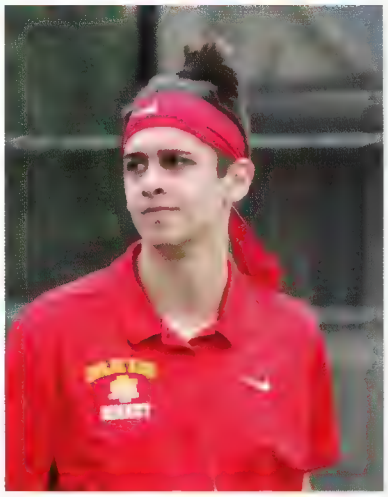
2023

SERVING our ace

The Boys Tennis Team had quite the season. They were a close knit team, that continued to improve throughout the season. Varsity player, Nathaniel Cruz, said, "The team did great compared to other years, going 5-8 in Conference." Cruz had much to be proud of this year, going 9-17. Coach Christopher Gabany mentioned, "We had a top 4 seed in the Sectional Tournament in singles, and fell just short of qualifying for the State tournament."

In every season, some challenges may arise, but the team came together to overcome them. Gabany said, "Most of our players are just starting to learn the game when they get to high school, and it can be very hard to compete with the experience that some of the other teams have. Our team does not let that bother them. They continue to work on their skills, and get better each and every day."

Cruz reflected on the season, stating, "I'm most proud of how I managed to improve all aspects of my game, and beat players I thought I would've lost to last year. I'm proud of my team when we annihilated UT 8-1. We all played amazing tennis that day." Gabany also recalled a proud moment during the season when his team came together and supported each other. Gabany said, "Our team really meshed well together, and always encouraged one another. They were truly good teammates, which I think is a crucial part to any team succeeding and improving." Cruz agreed, saying, "The team got along really well. In the end, the rides and the passion we shared brought us together."



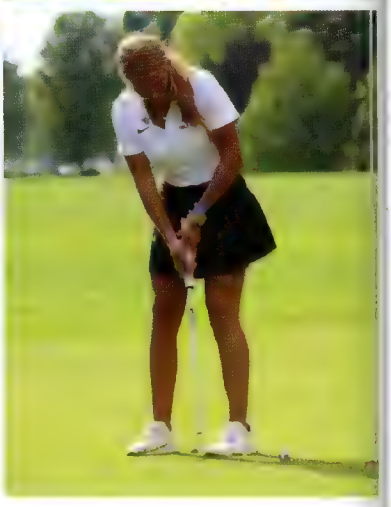
TEAM SUPER-STITIONS

"If my tee gets dirty, I need to throw it away."
- Mallory Hudnall, 10

"When I take my practice shots, I only take 2 before I hit."
- Lyn Kress, 12

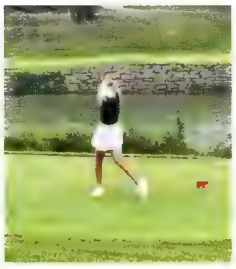
"If I have a bad drive, the rest will be good."
- Lauren Groene, 12

"I always listen to Zach Bryan or Brent Faiyaz to calm me down before a meet."
- Jozie Kerr, 11



"My favorite course to play is TPC Deere Run."
- Chloe Turner, 12

"My favorite course to play is Fyre Lake."
- Jozie Kerr, 11



OUR → way

"I think that our brand new sleeve of balls before every meet is something we've tried to keep a tradition or unique to us."
- Mallory Hudnall, 10

Her SWING of things

In her third year as Rocky's Head Golf Coach, Julie Hudnall is no stranger to leading teams. Golf is the third sport she coaches at the Rock, as she is also the Head Softball Coach and an Assistant Basketball Coach. Her vast experience has undoubtedly paid off for the Lady Rocks Golfers. After just finishing her 3rd year as Head Golf Coach, the change from the 1st year to the 3rd has been eye opening for Hudnall, as she stated she is, "More confident to tell the golfers what I think they shou d do, even though, sometimes, it is hard to do that because you are not actually swinging the club."

Senior Chloe Turner has been on the Varsity Golf Team all 4 years, including the last 3 years with Hudnall, and she has grown and learned a lot as a golfer in that time. Turner states, "My swing has improved a lot, along with my mentality." This growth was reflected in early October, when Turner and her teammate, Jozie Kerr made it to the 2A Sectionals in Normal, Illinois.

After getting their practice round in the day before the meet, Coach Hudnall and the girls discussed what scores were necessary to make it to State for the first time in Hudnall's Head Coach role. They determined by looking at past meets and other Regional rounds that an 85 would be necessary to make State. Turner saw that number, and went with it, ultimately shooting a 45 on the back 9, and then, an outstanding 40 on the front 9 to reach the goal. Even after meeting the goal, an 85 was 3 strokes short of moving on in the post season, but Turner was still proud of what she had accomplished this year, stating her proudest moment was, "Going down 9 strokes from Regionals to Sectionals to meet the goal set the night before."

With all of the Lady Rocks' success this year throughout the whole team, Coach Hudnall is aiming towards growing the game to younger girls to help them get involved, stating, "I would love to get a junior high program started!" And, with that, the future of the Lady Rocks Golf Team is looking very bright.

THE MEANING BEHIND THE NUMBER

"I chose the number 11 because it's an angel number, and it's a reminder to know that God is with me during game days."
- Kaylee Owens, 10

"I wear the number because it was my Mom's number, and it meant a lot to her and her legacy. She's the reason why I am the athlete I am today. My older brother, Grant is number 12, and my younger sister, Avery, is number 10, so we go in order- 12, 11, 10."
- AJ Stewart, 10

"I chose the number 28 as a memorial for my Dad, who passed away. His football number was 28. My Dad was an incredible athlete. He had a passion in everything he did, especially when supporting me. I knew that with his passing, he would have wanted me to continue his legacy, and keep that fire burning."
- A'rion Lonergan, 11

"I wear number 15 because it's my Dad's number during football in high school, so me and all three of my brothers wear 15, too."
- Delaney Carroll, 12

"I have always worn #15 to take after my Dad. Then, all my siblings followed and began to wear it on their jerseys. It's cool to know that I started a tradition amongst my family, just by taking after my Dad."
- Gunnar Carroll, 11

"My number came from the month my best friend was born (my brother). He's always inspired me to do my best. He supports me in every way. I am grateful for him, and I hope to accomplish more in life with his love and support."
- Thalia Camacho, 10

"Number 4 is well known in soccer/football as a defender's number, worn by many great world class defenders. I wore it because I look up to all those who wear it. I hope to one day have the skill that they have."
- Nelson Htoo, 10

SOPHOMORES *at* SECTIONALS

"The best part was definitely experiencing Sectionals with my friends. We were competing, but also having fun playing the game we love. Not everybody can say they played in Sectionals, so for me, to be able to say I've experienced it with my friends means a lot, and it'll be a moment I'll never forget."
- Namarion Coleman

"The best part about going to Sectionals as an underclassman is that even as a sophomore, I felt as if I was able to do my job on and off the field."
- Chase Curry

"Even though we didn't get the results we wanted, which was the State Championship, getting this deep in the playoffs, this early in my career, makes me prepare for these upcoming years."
- Alexander Churchill

our ROCKING *season*

A look into the 2023 season

This past baseball season started with many challenges, but ended as one of the most successful seasons in RIHS Baseball history. The Rocks looked to carry their success from the '22 season on to the '23 season, and did just that.

Head Coach Jake Scudder explained that the biggest targets set for the season were, "Our three team goals we had are as follows- To win the WB6 Conference Championship, win 20 games, and win a Regional Championship." The team went on to get 2nd in the Conference, win 31 games in the season, and won their second consecutive Regional Championship. Team leader, Aidan Brokaw explained the team's accomplishments, stating, "Although we did not win the Conference, we exceeded the 20 win goal by a lot, and set the record for most wins in Rock Island history." The previous record of most games won was 28 in the 2009-2010 season, but the team beat that, and set a new record at 31 wins in a season

The team faced a few challenges during their successful season. Brokaw explained, "One of the biggest challenges we faced was getting off to a very slow start We started off 8-8, and although that's not the best, our team stuck together, and never got down on ourselves. We kept working hard, and ultimately, that's what helped us win so many games in a row." The Rocks went on to only lose 1 more game the rest of the season. Teamwork was one of, if not the biggest aspects of this amazing season. "It is tough to pick out just a handful of guys who stuck out, and made an impact, when you have a very successful year like we had in 2023. It takes a collective of guys, buying into their team role, and that is exactly what happened within our program," said Scudder.

There were, however, three seniors who helped lead and guide this amazing team. "We had different leaders step up throughout the year in different situations, when called upon We relied heavily on graduated seniors Stephen Dillender, Dylan Martin, and Niklaus Janssen," explained Scudder. "We have continued to stick to our plan throughout the summer, and into the fall/ winter months. Our program prides itself on outworking opponents, and we will continue to do that throughout the off-season. We are looking forward to the 2024 season," explained Scudder.

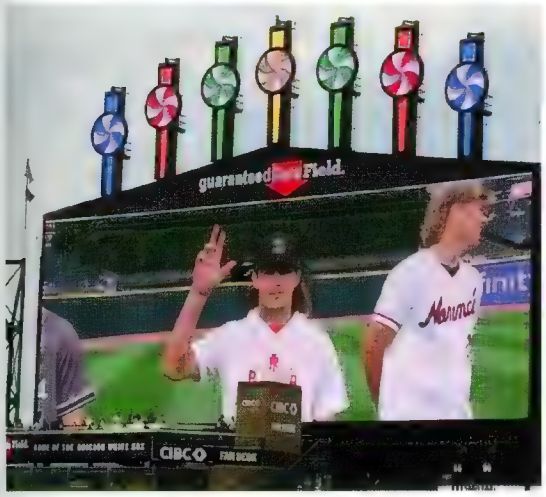
The 2023 season ended with an astonishing record of 31-9, with a Sectional Title, and with the Rock Island Rocks Varsity Baseball Team making history, and setting new records

varsity team 2023

varsity SCORES baseball

ONE FOR THE BOOKS

SHERRARD	W 5-3
FREEPORT	W 3-1
ORION	L 3-4
METAMORA	W 9-5
EAST MOLINE UNITED	L 3-4
OTTAWA	L 6-7
STERLING	W 8-1
ROCKRIDGE	L 13-12
QUINCY	W 5-2
QUINCY	W 5-1
GENESEO	L 3-1
STREATOR	L 5-4
MOLINE	L 7-6
MOLINE	W 8-4
GALESBURG	L 3-2
GALESBURG	W 8-5
GENESEO	W 4-3
ALLEMAN	W 11-1
ALLEMAN	W 14-0
LIMESTONE	W 2-0
MOLINE	W 12-11
EAST MOLINE UNITED	W 6-4
EAST MOLINE UNITED	W 5-0
ALLEMAN	W 13-3
ORION	W 12-9
GALESBURG	W 5-2
RICHWOODS	W 17-1
RICHWOODS	W 11-1
LASALLE-PERU	W 9-8
DAVENPORT WEST	W 9-5
DAVENPORT CENTRAL	W 14-2
WASHINGTON	W 5-0
DAVENPORT NORTH	W 11-7
DAVENPORT NORTH	W 4-2
OTTAWA	W 2-1
MORRIS	W 2-1
MORTON	W 4-1
RICHWOODS	W 8-5
SYCAMORE	L 8-0

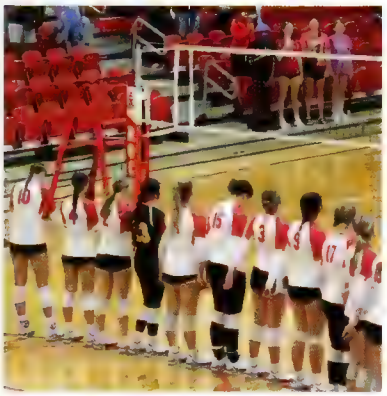


working HIS WAY to 3a

Rock Island High School's Junior (now Senior), Conner Dilulio had the amazing opportunity of being selected to play on the Illinois 3A All State Baseball Team. Dilulio was recognized for this achievement at the Chicago White Sox Baseball Field. "Finding out was a shock. I had no idea until I got an envelope in the mail, and saw the certificate in the envelope," Dilulio explained, as he wasn't expecting to get the recognition and the opportunity of playing with this All State Team. Dilulio stated, "Being on the White Sox Field seemed almost fake, like being in a stadium, and on the field, in front of thousands of people is just a cool experience that I'm glad I got to be a part of."

OUR → way

"Our way of achieving success is working hard in the off season together."
- John Wilde



PLAYING *our way*

The Rocky Volleyball Team finished this season 9-5 in the Western Big 6, and 15-19 overall, while placing 4th in Conference. With the returning players for the Rocks, as well as a new coaching staff, high expectations and meshing together as a team were the focus at the beginning of this season. Player Ellie McCoy stated, "I believe we exceeded those expectations."

This team was focused on goals for the season that redefined them as players, and showed a few big contributors to the team, overall, including Alaina Esposito, Amanda Mumma, and Ellie McCoy. Battin stated, "Alaina, our setter, ran her court very well, and put up a settable ball consistently, being one of the top leaders for assists in Conference each week. Amanda Mumma was another big contributor to our team, being in the libero position. She was very aggressive in the back row, digging the ball, and keeping the ball alive during crucial plays. Lastly, Ellie McCoy, our middle, was huge for us. She read the other side of the net well, setting up a good block for her defense to work around, and attacked a very consistent ball."

Coach Battin wanted to create new traditions for the program, as the team worked through the season with Battin as the new head coach. Player Ellie McCoy noted, "A few words that come to mind are, 'tradition,' in the sense that we created new traditions in the program, as well as honoring old ones. We had to get creative this year to re-define what it meant to be a Rock Island Volleyball player. I think our strong bond on and off the court helped us overcome any challenges we had throughout the season."

Not only did this team's bond help them in their season, but it also gave them their best memory on the court, as they accomplished their last goal, which was a win over Moline, ending the Maroons' 37 game winning streak. McCoy stated, "Running onto the court to embrace my teammates after Addie got the final kill will forever be engraved in my brain."

From Rivals to Rocks

Coach Alaxandria Battin took on her first year as Head Coach at Rock Island High School. Battin has had more than enough experience, coming from being a former college coach, as well as a past Moline Maroon. Battin noted, "The transition from being a Maroon to a Rock was really easy. I remember the first time I put a Rock Island shirt on. It felt a little weird, not going to lie. But after I met the girls, and we started lifting and open gyms, Rock Island quickly felt like home, and this is where I'm meant to be."

Coach Battin had her season set on new traditions for this program. The most important thing for Coach Battin's first year as a Rock was to leave an impact on this program positively, and she did just that. Battin stated, "I would like to think that I have come in, and made a very positive impact on this team. I hold these girls to a very high standard, on and off the court, keeping them disciplined and consistent. Hearing their feedback at the end of the season made me very happy on how they loved my coaching style. Even though some of our practices and workouts were tough, they never have felt torn down, only uplifted and encouraged. At the end of the day, I'm here to build better humans, and help guide these young ladies to be the best they can be."

Many future years with Coach Battin leading the Rocks' Volleyball Program are to come.

"To wear a Rock Island jersey, to me, means to prove yourself at the highest level, and give others a reason to show why we are where we are."
- Corbyn Ellis

"To me, wearing a Varsity jersey is an honor. The younger girls look up to you, and you're held to a higher level competitiveness."
- Addie Bomelyn

"Wearing the Rock Island jersey means a lot, and it's very prideful, being able to represent your school, with the jersey on."
- Autumn Stone

"Wearing my Varsity jersey means commitment to my school, team, and giving 110%, no matter what, on the court."
- Amanda Mumma

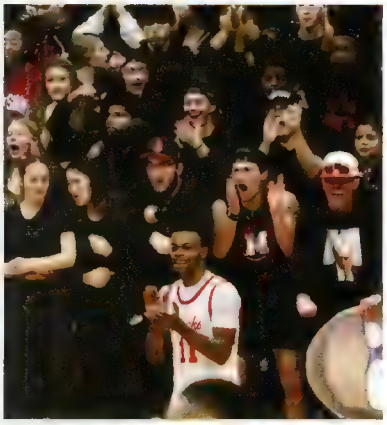
"When I was a little girl, I was so eager to grow up and play in the Field House with a Rocky jersey on, just like the girls I watched. Now, being at that point, I'm honored to have gotten the opportunity to wear it, and gain so many cherished memories in it these past 4 years."
- Alaina Esposito

"What I look for in a captain is someone who leads on and off the court. Someone who others look up to and respect. The reason why I chose Addie, AJ, and Ellie is- Addie shows great eadership off of the court, shows up to the gym first, asked what needs to be done, and helped out where help was needed. Ellie is someone who is very disciplined on and off the court. She doesn't show much emotion when she is down, and when she is up, she has this energy about her that circulates to her teammates. And, for AJ, she has a high volleyball IQ, and runs her court very well. Even though she is a sophomore, I believe a lot of her teammates look up to her, and look for her guidance when on the court." - Coach Alaxandria Battin

CAPTAINS 2023 →

OUR way →

"Our way is to train hard, show up, and compete."
- AJ Stewart



VARSITY TEAM

SOPHOMORE TEAM

FRESHMAN TEAM
FRESHMAN TEAM
FRESHMAN TEAM
FRESHMAN TEAM
FRESHMAN TEAM

"It is amazing to go out there, and compete for Rock Island on the Varsity Squad. The fans are like no other in the Quad."

- Kyle LaMonte

"Putting on a Varsity jersey makes me feel happy to play in front of the Rock Island fans."

- Larry Olivier

"Being on the Varsity Team is an honor because of all the history behind it, and it is something you look forward to when you're younger, but also a responsibility to make sure you're being respectful, working hard, and performing."
- Joe Allen

"It means a lot because you're not only representing the highest level of the program, but also representing the school."

- Dezmund Jackson

"To me, being able to wear a Varsity jersey is an honor, and shows how far, and how hard I've worked throughout the years to be able to get it."

- Brayden Marshall

"Being on the Varsity Team, it's not just fun, it's an honor to be there, learning every day."

- Myles Davis

ROCKY PRIDE
rocky family!

The Rock Island Rocks had an outstanding 2023-24 season, which ended with an overall record of 24-9, and an 11-3 record in Conference, placing 2nd overall in the Western Big Six. Rocky Basketball had plenty of big goals for their season. Coach Marc Polite explained these, stating, "First is always to play for a Conference Championship, and the second is to advance to the State Tournament." The Rocks fell short of these, but not without a fight, as they continued to finish out every game wholeheartedly, always working hard to achieve those goals, and represent the Rock well.

On the court, Rocky Basketball has many leaders. Their seniors played an important role this season, as it was their last. Coach Polite explained, "We had great leadership this year from our Senior group with KJ LaMonte, Larry Olivier Jr., Dvonte Cartwright, Dezmund Jackson, Brayden Marshall, and Joe Allen." They were all big contributors to this season, and led the team on the court.

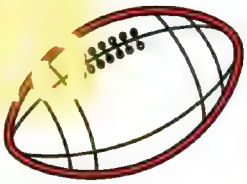
The Rocks faced many challenges, but worked to overcome them. The Rocks knew they lacked height, but always came to play 100% of the time. "Playing 5 guards is tough at our level, but I applaud our players for being tough, and willing to adjust very quickly," stated Polite. This tenacity was a big reason for the Rocks' success.

In this program, each member of the team all finished this season feeling valued, and important to this basketball team. This program is a family, through and through, and always worked hard, on and off the court. Coach Polite left this season hoping his athletes learned the most important thing from this program, "Rocky Pride, Rocky Family!"

OUR → way

"Our Way is working hard every day, and taking the time to do the little things right, so that we can be the best."
- Hunter St. Amand

CAPTAINS CODE



"Being a strong voiced individual, and having the ability to earn the respect of others."
- Myles Davis

Previously, Head Coach Dieudonné served 4 years on the Rocky staff as an assistant coach. He now is the 23rd Head Coach of Rocky's Football Program. Coach Dieudonné explains, "Rock Island is a tough, no nonsense, hardworking city, which fits my personality well." He continued, stating he was, "extremely excited to return back to Rocky!"

"Being consistent in working hard, going to every workout and practice, eventually, it rubs off on everyone else."
- Joe Allen

"Working hard consistently, every single day, to get better."
- Isaiah Samuelson

"Honesty shows your team the amount of loyalty you have for them."
- Kevin Mayares

ONE TEAM
one dream

Coming into the football season, having learned an entirely new offense and defense, as well as facing 5 state ranked teams, left the Rocks 0-5 to start. But, they persisted by remaining positive, and continuing to fight through, even when they felt the weight of the criticism and naysayers.

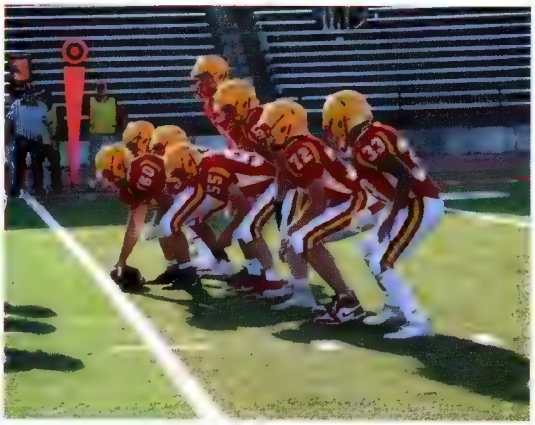
The team's standout athletes and leaders, according to Coach Dieudonné were Garr Tarr, Jae'Vion Clark-Pugh, Isaiss Duarte, V'Jay Garrard, Amare Overton, Joe Allen, Myles Davis, Kevin Mayares Jr., and Isaiah Samuelson, who helped to turn this season around. Coach Dieudonné emphasized, "Garr Tarr, hands down, was the newcomer with the biggest impact this year."

Through the tough times, Dieudonné explained, "The players remained positive, and overcame the disappointing start, to finish the season, winning 3 of our last 4 games - we beat Sterling High for the first time since they joined the Conference 6 years ago," as well as Geneseo, both of which made the playoffs. Overall, the record was 3-6, 3-3 in Conference, placing the team 3rd overall in Conference. Dieudonné hopes to instill persistence in the team, and to have them face challenges head on for the years to come.

Despite the tough season, the Rocks have much to be proud of, and a lot to build on for next season.

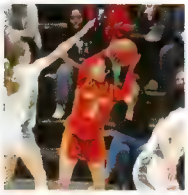
TEAM DINNERS

"Our way is based upon support. I'd label every one of my teammates as brothers, and I sacrifice for them, day in and day out. We are like a family."
- Avery Flactiff



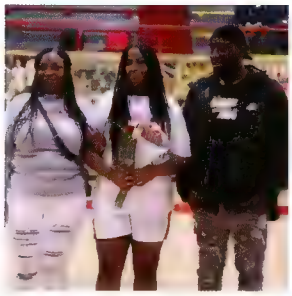
TEAM *captains*

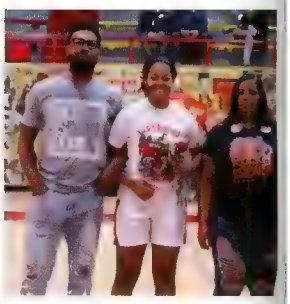
"I was happy and grateful that I was picked by my teammates to be their captain."
- Fidelia Awoudi

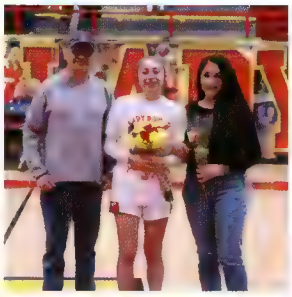


"I felt honored and excited. I didn't think I was going to be captain, but I was really happy after being chosen."
- Giselle Aceviz

"I was excited and nervous because I knew my coaches and teammates would expect a lot from me, but it's a great feeling to know my teammates chose me to be someone to help lead the team."
- DaNaijah Cartwright







OUR *way*

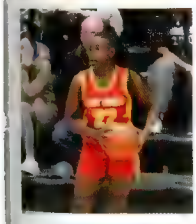
"The Lady Rocks' way is eating team dinners every Wednesday before our game the next day, or all of our random dancing and singing sessions in the locker room, on the bus, and before games. Also, before going in the locker room, being in a circle, while dancing and laughing."
- Ka'Zaria Bell

Every starter has a unique handshake they do when they get called out for the lineup.

After call outs, the team huddles up and does a chant, while pushing everyone around.

After the warm up, the team gets a pep talk before going back to the locker room.

SUPERSTITIONS *superstitions*



GROWTH ON THE *team*
GROWTH IN THE *program*

The Lady Rocks may not have had the record (9-20) they wanted, but Coach Hall believed they ended the season with something better, a great mindset to continue to build the program with, and a new family. "I think the fact that I really enjoyed being with them every day was great, and how close of a group they were, and they always had each other's backs," explained Coach Hall.

This year, the Lady Rocks were a pretty young team, while playing senior led teams. That didn't change Coach Hall's expectations much. "I don't want to put pressure on them. They are all super competitive, and understand what we did well, and what we didn't, and also know to get better at those things, we have to work on it," explained Hall. However, Coach Hall still expected much from this group, stating, "As coaches, I think our expectations are the same- represent ourselves, team, family, school, and community to the best of our ability. Also, I think we also want to be better in the end, than we were in the beginning, and we did that, for sure."

Lastly, the Lady Rocks had a young starter when freshman, Jordyn Randle was pulled up to Varsity. Hall stated, "I had an idea, but I wanted to make sure when I did [pull her up], we put her in some good situations. Playing the PG spot on Varsity level is tough. She did great, and will only get better in these next three years."

Overall, the Lady Rocks overcame many challenges this season, and continued to meet coaches' expectations, but most importantly, they became a family, which is better than anything for the future of the program. There are plenty of things coming in these next few years, and the Lady Rocks are eager to get started in the off season.

VARSITY *team*

SOPHOMORE *team*

FRESHMAN *team*

CLASS OF '24

"My role is the assistant coach. As a former Lady Rock, being a part of the program means the world to me. It's a privilege and honor to wear 'Lady Rocks' across your chest, and to be a part of the Lady Rocks family. It was, and is, bigger than basketball for me. I will always be there for my team, even when the ball stops bouncing."
- Coach Betty

COACHING FROM THE *heart*

"My role is to help prepare my athletes, and to help get you guys better and confident going into every game, as well as give you life lessons and confidence in life, too. I take pride in coaching, and it means everything. Life or death! If my team is rocking, then I'm rolling."
- Coach Larry

"I am most proud of being named Team Captain this year."
- Andrew Oliver

"I am most proud of this being my first year ever in swim, and already making really solid times this season, for it only being my first year."
- Thom Elliott

"The thing I am most proud of is the amount of work, effort, and improvement my team and I have made over the last few months."
- Nathan Anderson

LET'S DIVE into THE SEASON

Sophomore, Andrew Oliver is the only diver for Rocky this season, but worked hard to make an impact for the Rocks each meet. "Being the only diver, I constantly get all the attention from my coach, but that also means there is no one else to criticize and critique," he explained.

Andrew was also the only diver last season as a freshman, and won the Western Big 6. "My goal for the season is to be the Western Big 6 Champ, for my second year in a row," he stated. Being the only diver for the team can be hard, but Andrew was certainly up for the challenge. "Diving is a very mentally challenging sport. You have to give 100% effort at all times," said Andrew.

GOING WITH THE Flow

For the second year, Rocky's Swimming and Diving Team has faced the challenge of not having a home pool. However, despite those challenges, the Rocks set out for a successful season. Coach Rebecca Brown explained their goals were, "Having a fun season, improve our techniques, and drop time in our events."

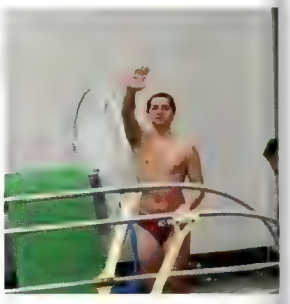
During their season, they had hardships, but they worked to overcome those. "We have a small, young team, but they all support each other and have fun at practice and meets. We are also practicing late at night. They have done a great job keeping up with school, and coming to practice," said Brown.

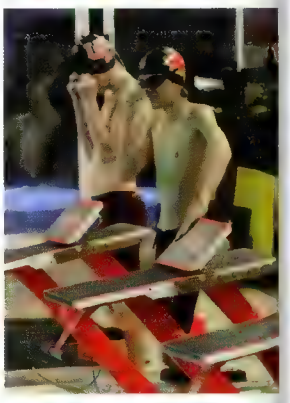
Throughout the season, the coaches pushed the boys to become better. "Coach Henry and I are always pushing the boys to be better in practice, and it shows in meets. We are taking time to do drills to improve strokes, and push the boys on hard sets to do their best, even if they are tired," Coach Brown said.

The hard work proved to bring the Rocks success. "In Conference, we had some top times. Our medley relay ended up 3rd and 4th, and swimmers received a medal for that. Andrew, our diver, also was third in diving, and got a medal for his efforts. While we didn't win a dual as a team, we won events at duals, and the boys were always excited about that. We had great time drops from the start of the season to the end," Brown said.

The team was led by Matthew Roessler and Andrew Oliver, with the help of some newcomers who made an immediate impact. "These four were a great addition to Matthew and Andrew. Calvin Parr was a great help to our relays this year. Antonio Aguilar became a strong 200 swimmer, and also helped with relays. Nathan was a strong leader in the pool, and was giving good advice to other swimmers. Nathan has been swimming club for years, and is a freshman this year. Thom came in as a junior, and showed this team what it means to never give up. I'm excited to see this group grow," stated Brown.

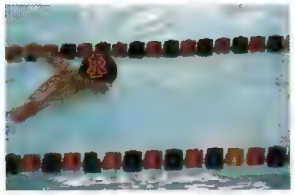
Coach Brown is hopeful about the future of the program, and eager to continue teaching her athletes that "If you put in the work, you can do great things, and it is not always about getting a 1st place, but getting better yourself."

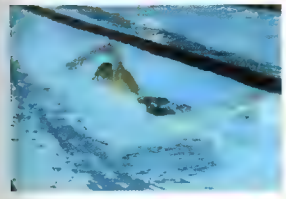


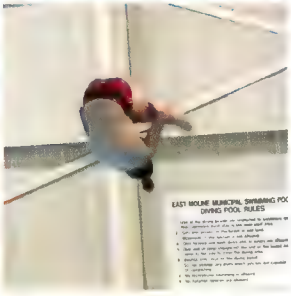


SWIMMING & 2023-24

"I'm very proud of how our new swimmers have improved over the season."
- Matthew Roessler



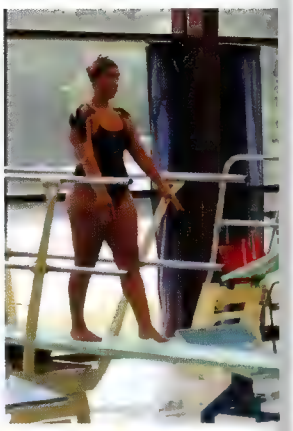




OUR → way

"I would define 'Our Way' by how we act as a team outside of the sport. We regularly do things like team dinners, snow days, as well as traditions we carry on from every year."
- Matthew Roessler

JUST KEEP swimming



This year, the second year without a home pool, the Rocky Girls Swimming Team focused on improvement. "The girls worked on their starts this year, and they have improved greatly. They were given videos to watch, and then worked on what they saw in practice. Starts were the biggest improvement this year," stated Coach Brown. All the girls bettered their times from the beginning of the season to the end of the season. Their hard work paid off with improved times throughout the season.

Rocky's swim captains were Lizzie Shorten and Gracelynn Veys. "They brought fun to the practice," said Brown. "Noah Wright was a newcomer who greatly impacted the team. This was her first year swimming, as a junior, and she grew from a brand new swimmer to a Varsity competitor, who qualified for Sectionals." Brown explained that Wright was always at practice, and was a positive influence on the rest of the team.

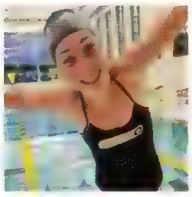
The team's biggest accomplishment was "Sticking it out. They had 2 weeks before Conference, with no meets, and that is a hard time for them to stay motivated. The girls came to practice every day, ready to work, and it showed in their last meets of the season. A big challenge we face was not having our own pool. It is hard, and they practice late, at 7:15-9 at night. They overcame this challenge by having some activities before practice," Brown stated.

Ultimately, Brown hopes what the team gains from the season goes beyond just this year. "I hope my athletes gain friendships that will last forever, and a love for a sport that is not easy," Brown said.

"For me, being on the Swim Team helped with being with people with similar interests, making new friends, or getting to know others better, while also being able to take care of myself. Also, we have lots of fun, which helps take my mind off stress."
Angelina Abarca, 9th Grade

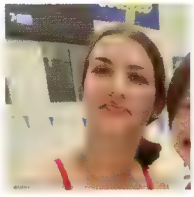
"Being on the Swim Team for Rocky has given me a greater sense of belonging. I feel at home with these girls. They're all like older sisters to me. I know if I'm having issues in classes or with people, I can talk to them. I love them, and everyone makes my Rocky experience."
Sage Ray, 9th Grade

"Being on the Swim Team has given me a sense of belonging that I have never found in any other activity before. Everyone on the team is so wonderful, and it has presented so many opportunities involving friendships, both inside and outside of Rocky."
Mia Hixson, 11th grade



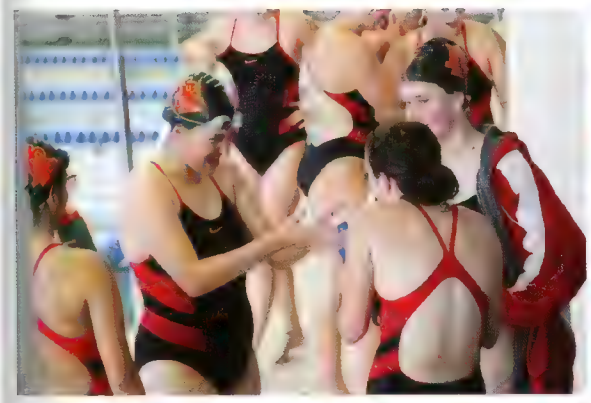
"Being on the Swim Team has brought me many opportunities and memories that I am grateful for. I feel it builds a foundation to my high school experience. Go Rocks!"
Noah Wright, 11th Grade

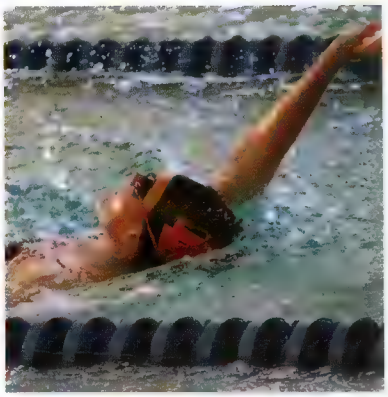
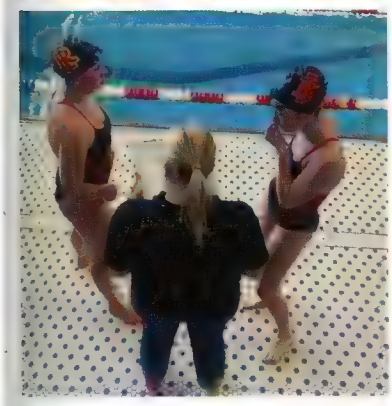
"Being on the Swim Team has improved my experience at Rocky. It has allowed me to meet new and different people, and I have many positive experiences."
Maddie Schrempf, Grade 9

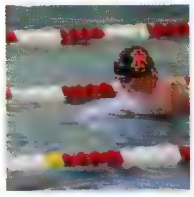


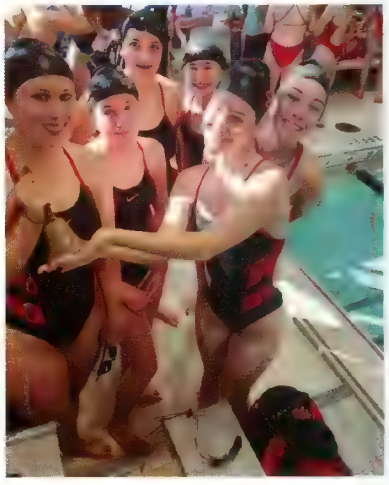
"Swimming for Rocky has given me built-in friendships and exciting new experiences."
Kateri King, Grade 9

SWIMMING & DIVING

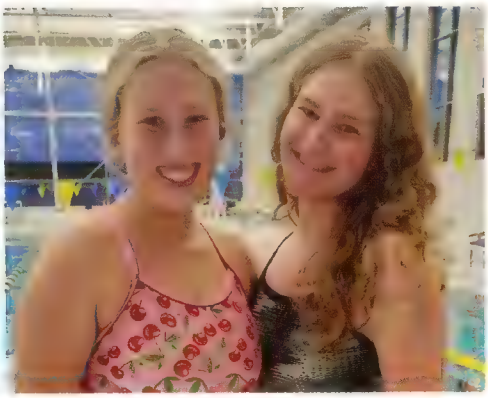






CAPTAINS



"One thing I've learned the last two years has been to never give up, even when it starts to get hard. I've gotten very close with all the girls on the team, and it's fun getting to know everyone on a different level."
Lizzie Shorten, Grade 11

"The Swim Team has had one of the strongest impacts on me. It has helped me grow in numerous skills, as well as giving me the confidence to come out of my shell. The bonds the girls and I have formed are ones that I will cherish forever."
Gracelynn Veys, Grade 10

OUR → way

"Our way is always supporting each other, and watching each other improve throughout the season. We're always there to cheer each other on!"
- Gracelynn Veys

making OUR WAY on the court

As the 2023-24 season comes to a close, the RIHS Special Olympics Team looks back, and reflects on how they have worked hard and improved tremendously.

A major highlight from this season is the team had the chance to play against former Rocky players. Coach Lisa Martens stated that it was her favorite memory. "I loved the games in the girls' gym against some of our former players. The crowd was so loud and supportive," she explained.

Some team leaders include Drew DeMarlie, Frank Holmes, and freshman, King Flowers. The team also gained some talented new players, too. "We have a new freshman, King Flowers, David Pack-Lewis, and Micah Hodgett. They all love to play basketball, and the team is lucky to have them," explained Martens.

The team has learned many new skills this year like, "recognizing their fellow teammates' strengths and weaknesses, and being able to pick them up when they are down," stated Coach Lisa Martens.

"Every time we go to a game, I tell them that they are representing a I of Rock Island High School. We need to behave, be kind, and have good sportsmanship."

- Coach Lisa Martens

the most SLAMMING aspects

"I love when I get to pass and dribble the ball. Also, I love to shoot threes."
- Drew DeMarlie

"I love being able to play with my friends on the court."
- Griff Garro

"I love cheering with the fans, and helping out my teammates."
- Frank Holmes

"It's laid back being on the eSports Team. I play Mario Kart 8. I like how everyone can have input to help the other people perform better."
- Josh Brown

"Being on the eSports Team is fun. I play Mario Kart 8, and I enjoy playing it because it's one of my favorite video games, and it's an excuse to play with friends."
- Jackson Bennett

"Being on the eSports Team is fun because I get to hang out with my friends, and play video games. I play Mario Kart 8."
- Jett Brandt

"Being on the eSports Team is basically a lot of pretending to find funny jokes. I jump from game to game. Mostly, it's Smash."
- Benjamin Richardson

OUR → way

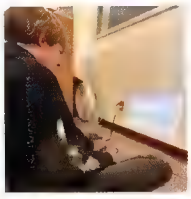
"The eSports' way is celebration, congratulation, and collaboration. Here, it's all about being flashy and being the best. We work together to be a better player and person. Some of us are better than others, but all of us have a good time, no matter what."
- William Hampton

The Rocky eSports Team had a victorious season last fall, with the Super Smash Brothers Ultimate Crew Team winning Sectionals and qualifying for State.

The eSports Team played a variety of games, such as Mario Kart, Valorant, Fortnite, Super Smash Brothers Ultimate, and Rocket League.

Despite their success, the team has faced challenges. Coach Laurie Vroman reflected, "We don't have reliable internet at school, so my players compete from home."

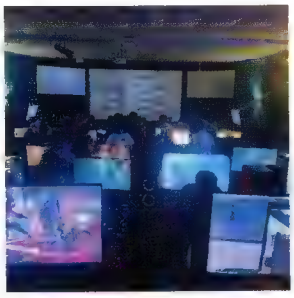
Coach Vroman hopes to create strong bonds amongst the team, saying, "I hope they feel part of an eSports family when they leave. I want eSports members to feel welcomed and accepted."



~~FIRST~~ ~~YEAR~~ AT ~~STATE~~

"Going to State was honestly and eye opening experience to help show what I want to do in the future. It opened up a lot of doors for me, as many col eges have reached out. I play, and hope we return back to State this year, for Super Smash Bros."
- Kade McKillip

Going to State made me realize it was really something, and not just a little club. It was a lot of excitement, know ng we got this far for the first year. More than likely, we will return again this year, playing Smash Bros Ult mate.
- Ethan Carls



TEAM *leaders*

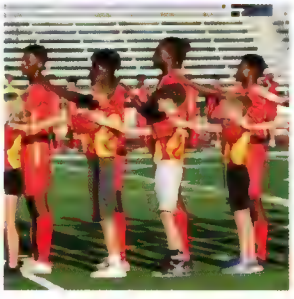
Omar Sosa, Junior (Team Captain)

Aidan Ntinyegezwa, Senior (Team Captain)

Eh Kler Moo, Senior (Team Captain)

"This group was invested in the team's success from the beginning, and set great examples for the team to follow, both on and off the field. It was truly a great effort with others doing their part, as well, to make this team what it became over the course of the season."
- Coach Enrique Sandoval

VARSITY *team*



JV team

FRESHMAN team

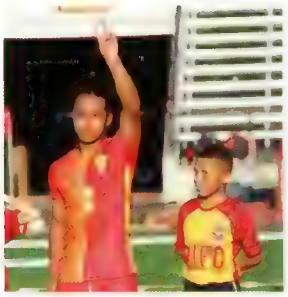
KICKING *our way*

The Rocky Boys' Soccer Team closed out the season 10-9 in the regular season, 4-3 in the Conference, and lost its only Regional game 3-2 against Normal Community. "The boys deserved a better result. They worked hard, and gave it their all," says Coach Sandoval.

These very devoted players love the game, and they put in the work and strove to help others on the team. "They looked at the team as a family, where the good of the 'whole' mattered more than what was just good for one," explained Sandoval. One of Coach Sandoval's proudest accomplishments this season was finishing both the regular and Conference seasons with a winning record.

Benjamin Goeh was the team's top goal scorer, with 11 goals on the season. Aidan Ntinyegezwa was on the defensive end, and scored 6 goals himself. Freshman Diego Palacios and Jonas Cortez broke into the Varsity roster, as well as sophomores, Ramadhan Sango, Lawson Zulu, and Ezekiel Mugisha as sophomores.

Coach Sandoval works to help the players become a bigger part of the community, and help them succeed in their everyday lives. "We are trending in the right direction, and we are progressing as a program," states Coach Sandoval.



"Being on the Varsity Soccer Team means being part of the top-level team, showcasing your skills, and representing your school with pride and honor."
- Ler Bwe

"Strive to play our best."
- Gavin Gasper

OUR way

BETTER TOGETHER

Brothers, Ian and Evan Regur, and Asa and Gabe Mahn talk about their takeaways from this past season, and sharing the athletic spotlight with family.

As the saying goes, "Great minds think alike." Both the Regurs and Mahns explained what they enjoy most about being on the Track Team together was "the time that it gives us together," said Gabe Mahn. The Regur brothers had similar takeaways from the season together, stating, "Although we are on separate ends of the track and field spectrum, it always helps to know that my brother had my back, not only as a teammate, but as family," said Evan Regur. The Mahn brothers, being in similar events, stated, "We both looked forward to just talking to each other, talking during the hard practices, the long practices, the cold ones, the hot ones, but to us, it didn't matter what was happening all around, as long as we were able to focus, and had each other. We always worked better together. I'm going to miss my running partner when I leave, but most of all, I'm going to miss my brother," said Asa Mahn.

A SENSE OF *pride*

This past season for the Rocky Boys Track Team was a pivotal time for the program, with having standout athletes like Dai Shaun McCaw, Ian Regur, DeShawn Rucker, Santana Smith, and Darius Tongo, and including newcomers like Quincy Black, Jaylin Craig, and Gabe Mahn, as well as a new Head Coach, Jarrin Williams. With the amount of talent and dedication in these athletes, Williams stated that his goal for his team last year was, "to score 90 points at the Conference Meet." Although the team did fall short, it is with complete pride that Williams explained, "Everyone improved from the beginning to the end of the season."

The program placed 5th overall in the Western Big Six Conference, scoring 72 points. This was a step up from the previous year, where the team placed 7th. Williams hopes to keep working his way up, by making a goal to "place higher in Conference this upcoming season, and also have multiple State Qualifiers."

As a Rocky graduate, Williams had always wanted to come back to the program. He loved the environment and energy that being a part of the track team gave him. By leading the program that means so much to him, Williams stated, "I hope the athletes gain a sense of RI Pride when competing for the RIHS Track and Field Team. I hope they gain lifelong friendships with their teammates, and so much more." Those are just some of the benefits Williams gained from competing when he was at Rocky, and he wishes to pass on that feeling to his athletes.

Overall, Williams described this season as a time of "growth" for the team, and he can't wait to get the boys back in action on the track again.

OUR *way*

"Our way is to give 100% each and every time we step onto the track."
- Isaiah Samuelson

RUNNING INTO *senior* YEAR

Going into his senior year, Samuelson says, "I am hoping for the top spot on Varsity for shot put." Samuelson wants to continue being the hard working athlete he says Rock Island has shaped him into being. "Being here showed me how to do all the little things right, and how important it is to try your best, every single day, because it will pay off in the end," he states. Samuelson hopes his "payoff" will result is him "breaking PRs on shot put and discus."
Isaiah Samuelson

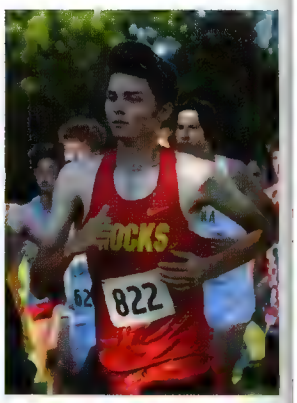
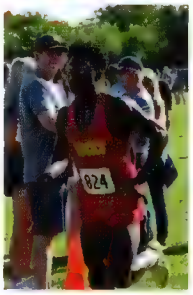
As McKinney enters his senior season, there are a few goals he hopes to achieve. "I'm trying to hit the State PR," says McKinney. Being a multi-sport athlete, McKinney uses his sports to enhance each other. "I do track to keep in shape and ready for football season," McKinney explains. One aspect of the Track Team McKinney cherishes the most while being a part of the Rocky Track and Field Team is the memories he has made, and the people he has met along the way.
- Alec McKinney

THEN → now

Asa Mahn, 12

Jayden Putnam, 12

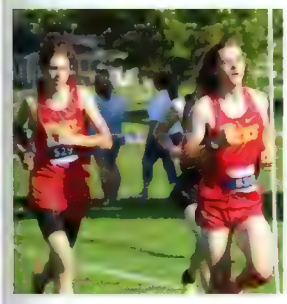
Merrick Stockwell, 11

OUR → way

"Our way is having each other's backs. I think one really unique thing about this team is how close we all are. That' the effect of dying together in workouts twice a week, but also the reason we continue to do it."
- Asa Mahn

BOYS XC



RUNNING THROUGH *the memories*

"My favorite memory is finding out that the team had qualified for State for the first time since 2006."
Asa Mahn, 12

"When we found out we qualified for State my Junior year, and we celebrated as a team."
Jayden Putnam, 12

"My favorite memory from Cross Country is when we made it to State as a team last year."
Ian Regur, 12

ANOTHER GREAT *run*

The 2023 Boys' Cross Country season has been one of a well bonded team that really showed up this season. They have put in the work, and their times showed it. From winning meets, to State qualifiers, this year has been an exciting season for this team. Senior Jayden Putnam (JP) felt that the team did well running wise, and had great team chemistry. From pasta dinners and hanging out, the team's bond continued to grow. As their camaraderie increased, their times decreased. These runners are capable of so much, and they really demonstrated this throughout the season.

Coach Williams shared that, "I hope that my student-athletes realize they are capable of much more than they may think they are capable. I also want them to realize they can accomplish even more as a team, if they fully commit to the team goals."

The team really came together this season when they won two of their meets! "Winning our first meet (the Limestone Invitational) and the Border Wars Invite at Saukie," were some of Coach Williams' highlights. Putnam also shared this sentiment, when discussing what meet he felt the team did best at, stating, "Probably, Border Wars at Saukie." Putnam shared that at Border Wars, "We ended up winning that meet. We got to show what our team could do, and we got first by a pretty big margin, which gave us confidence that we're a good team." In order to win these meets, the team had to come together, and run as one to win and perform their best. "The two previously mentioned meets (Limestone and Border Wars) were meets where we came together as a team, and performed," Williams explained.

The new runners to the team demonstrated significant improvement throughout the season, and greatly contributed to the team. These include: Elliot Batz, Liam Muir, Judah Kargl, DeShawn Rucker, Dylan Hartzler, and Unah Chenoweth. Williams shared that, "I was very proud of the growth so many of my younger runners demonstrated throughout the season." Everyone on the team showed growth throughout the season, making it a memorable one.

With every season, there are many challenges that come with it. The biggest challenge the team had to face this season was getting bumped up to 3A. "Last year, we were 2A, and we made it to State, and we did really well, and the biggest challenge was getting bumped up to 3A," Putnam said. They expected this change was going to be tough, since going from 2A to 3A is a big difference. "It doesn't seem like it would be that big, but, oh my gosh, the times are insane," Putnam added. But their positive attitude throughout the season was to still try their best and have a fun season. Putnam shared, "We knew what to expect. We knew it would be so much harder, and we just said, 'If we wanted to do well, this is what the expectation was,' but if we didn't, we weren't going to be crushed by it. It was like, 'Let's hope this happens. If it doesn't, we still had a great showing, and there is no reason to be ashamed of our season or anything.'" Even with these challenges, the team's season still managed to be a great one.

Sophomore, Gabe Mahn, had a phenomenal season. He qualified for State, and was an All-Conference runner for the team. Ian Regur was also a member of one of the All-Conference Teams, showing some of the team's outstanding runners.

Overall, the team had a great, and exciting season, making new connections, achieving goals, and creating memories they can hold onto.

"I've been running for a while now, and I thought it would be fun to join. I knew others on the team already, and that made a much more easier experience when joining. My favorite aspect was probably the team chemistry. Everyone got along with each other really well, and it made everything a lot more fun, and a great season."

Elliot Batz, 9

"I joined the team to have fun and to get better at running. My favorite aspect is my teammates because they are just amazing."

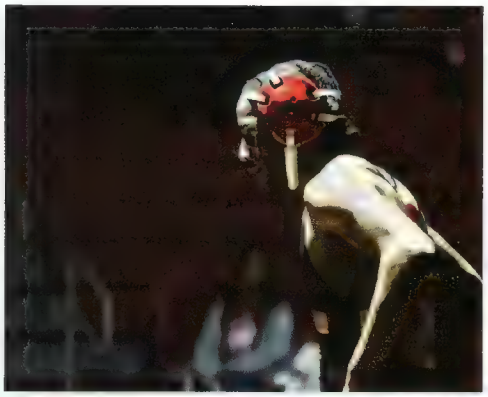
Judah Kargl, 9

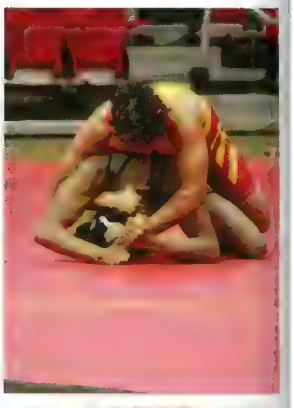
"I did cross country in junior high, and I like the reward of setting a new PR. My favorite aspect of being on the team was the supporting people who are always fun to be around."

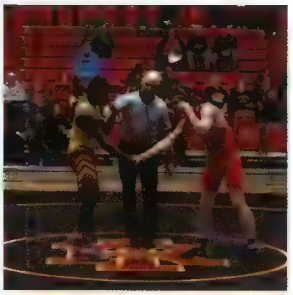
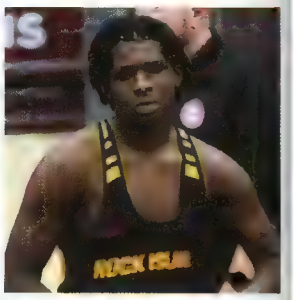
Dylan Hartzler, 9

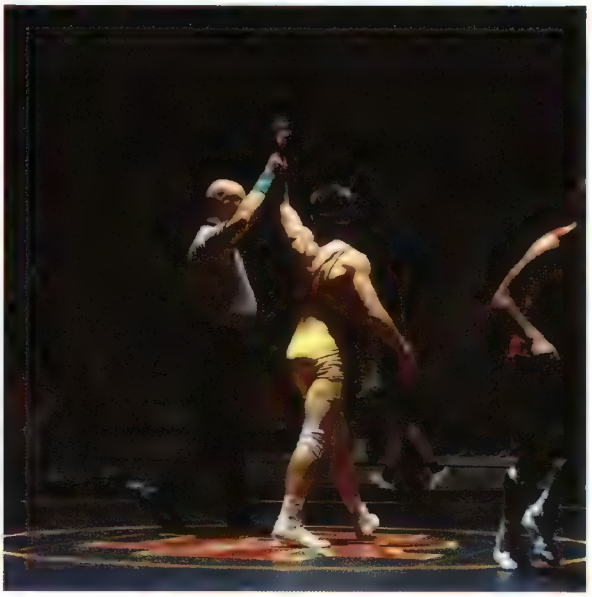
"My parents ran marathons, and so I have ran with them since elementary school, so it made sense that I would just keep running. My favorite aspect of the Cross Country Team is getting to do something that I love with other people."

Liam Muir, 9







WRESTLING *rocks*

"I truly enjoy watching student athletes dedicate themselves to one of the oldest and hardest sports on the planet. It is most rewarding when they set goals, and work hard to try and reach those goals."
- Coach Stockwell

the rocks TAKEDOWN this season

The Rock Island High School Wrestling Team's main goal this season was to, "Win Regionals and advance as many kids to State as possible," according to Head Coach Joel Stockwell. While they didn't meet every goal, they had two State Champions, and a very successful post season. "We fell a little short of our goals. We were not able to win Regionals, despite qualifying 8 of our 14 wrestlers for Sectionals. We also only had 5 go to State and 4/5 got medals, and became All State Athletes," explained Stockwell.

Two of the State Qualifiers, Andrew Marquez and Truth Vesey, were able to place 1st in their divisions. These two wrestlers are also senior captains this year, and advised their underclassmen teammates to continue being leaders and encourage their peers. "As a senior captain, my advice to the upcoming captains is to lead by example, and motivate your team with your passion and dedication. Show them what it means to be a true leader, both on and off the mat," says Marquez. Truth stated, "I motivate my team by just explaining how hard we work each day, and reminding them of our end goal. The advice I would leave for the captains coming next year would be leading by example, because the underclassmen are watching everything from how you work to how you talk."

Winning State is a very big accomplishment for not only the wrestlers, but the coaches, too. "I was so excited and proud. I have watched them work so hard to strive and reach their goals. They have become great athletes, but maybe more importantly, they have become life champions," stated Stockwell.

This season was one of the best Rock Island has seen in awhile. "I hope this year's success can carry over and inspire younger and less experienced student athletes to buy into the program, and set goals to follow their teammates' successes," said Stockwell. This season showed a strong team, that has seen so much success, and is carrying on the tradition of building future State Champions!

STEREO TYPE

"It feels pretty nice. A lot of people say that women can't do some of the things that men can do. But in my opinion, they couldn't be more wrong."
- Courtney Walls, 9

"It's great being a girl wrestler, especially because of how great the wrestling community is improving every day, since there have been more tournaments and opportunities for girls. I hope by the time I graduate, that there will be more girls eager to join such a great sport, and that there will be even more opportunities for girls wrestling."
- Lucille Mass, 9

"It's hard. I have to work harder than the guys to prove myself. I've wrestled since my seventh grade year. I've always been one of the only girls on the team."
- Sanaa Hampton, 12

OUR → way

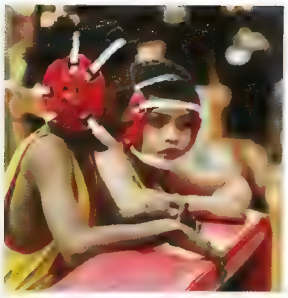
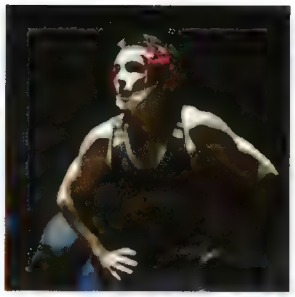
"How I define our way is we work hard in practice and out. We strive to win, and be the one percenters."
- Merrick Stockwell

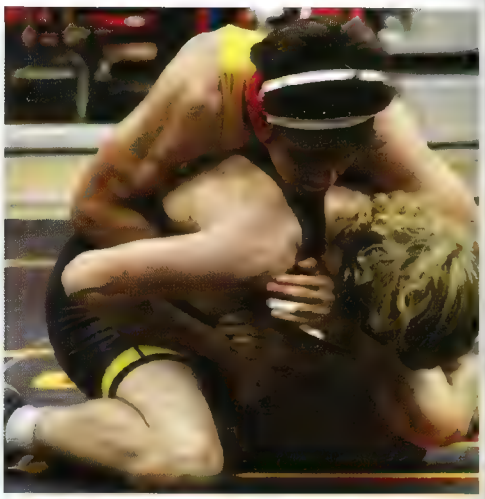
TEAM leaders

"It's really hard. One specific challenge I face is time management. Balancing my own training and competitions with the responsibilities of being a leader can be tough. Another challenge I face is finding the right balance between pushing myself to excel individually, and supporting my teammates to reach their full potential. But despite these challenges, the rewards and growth make it all worth it!"
- Andrew Marquez,12

"It gets complicated sometimes. Knowing you have your individual goals you want to achieve, but also knowing at the end of the day, it's a team sport, and wanting everyone to get better. It's always a big goal of mine to not only see progress with just myself, but within my team."
- Truth Vesey, 12

"I say, me trying to be my best helps my team. Leading by example and doing my part to help us be our best, and then, helping others when I see something or have the chance."
- Amare Overton, 12



ROCK ISLAND

ROCK ISLAND

driving GOLF to success

The Biggest Triumphs of the 2023 Season

"My biggest achievement was shooting a +1 at Geneseo."
- Carson Banks

"My biggest achievement this golf season was the fact that I started off very slow, and wasn't doing well, but I really started doing well towards the end of the season, which led me to become All Conference, and to get 3rd in Regionals."
- Chase Hadley

ALL IN this season

The Rock Island High School Boys' Golf Team excelled in the 2023 season with their teamwork and dedication to the sport. Coach Craig Sharp led a talented group of golfers, who showed sportsmanship and camaraderie. Coach Sharp reflected on the team's goals, stating, "Our goals are always the same; to do as well as we can in the Conference Meet, to qualify as many players as possible through the Regional, and qualify someone for State."

Despite facing challenges, including an injury to their number two player, Carson Banks, the team remained resilient. Coach Sharp pointed out, "We only finished 6th in Conference, and only qualified one through Regionals. This was not what we hoped for, but had a key injury to our number two player, Carson Banks, that limited us." However, the team's leadership from Chase Hadley and Carson Banks proved instrumental. Coach Sharp emphasized their impact, saying, "Our team leaders were Chase Hadley and Carson Banks. Our top newcomer was Zayden Morris. He was a freshman, who played Varsity all season."

A standout moment for the team was during a dual meet against Geneseo, where Chase Hadley shot a 35, Carson shot a 37, and Ayden Braud shot a 37, which showcased the team's potential. Coach Sharp reminisced, stating, "Our favorite memory and best performance was at the Geneseo dual meet. We were on the verge of getting quite a bit better."

Coach Sharp believes that golf offers lessons beyond the sport itself, stating, "Athletes can learn a lot from playing golf. They are on their own for most of the match. They have to know the rules. They have to coach themselves, and they have to police the other players in their group. They learn lessons here that they cannot get from other parts of the high school experience." The sport teaches responsibility, self-coaching, and sportsmanship, shaping the players into well-rounded individuals.

OUR way

"I'd say we're just a quiet group that goes about our business. Our mentality is to work under the radar and perform."
- Carson Banks

MOVING fore-ward

Chase Hadley was a standout golfer for the Rocks this season, and was selected as First Team All Conference for the second year in a row. He also qualified for Sectionals.

CAPTAINS 2023

Riley Hawotte

"Leading the team was fun because you always have people looking up to you," Hawotte said. Hawotte said she never felt pressure because she was just having fun. Hawotte's favorite memory from the season was just being able to help and lead the team when needed.

Kayla Rice

"I felt honored leading the team." Rice said. "I am used to being a leader, so I didn't feel any pressure." Although Rice was used to being the leader, she felt overwhelmed, at times. Rice's favorite memory was being able to create a positive vibe with the team, even when things weren't easy.

FRESHMEN *on varsity*

Iphe Carr
"Playing on Varsity was an amazing experience," Carr said. "Having a spot on Varsity gave me so many opportunities to get better, and learn from my mistakes." Carr's favorite memory was scoring the first goal of the season along side, senior Denise Carr.

Kampbell Allen
Being a freshman on Varsity, Allen said that, "There is a little bit of pressure from your teammates, being a newcomer, and not knowing the ability your teammates are capable of." Allen's favorite memory was all of the long bus rides with her teammates.

Aubrey Doss
"It was definitely nerve wracking at first, but I loved the competitive atmosphere because it helped me improve," Doss said. Doss's favorite memory was having fun with teammates, both on and off the field.

AJ Stewart
"Being a freshman on Varsity was definitely a challenge, especially being in such a vital position," Stewart said. Stewart's favorite memory was being top 90 in the nation for the goalie position.

one GOAL *at a time*

It is a new era for the Rock Island Girls Soccer Team with new coach, Zach Vroman at the helm. With a new coach comes many different changes. Going into the season, Vroman wanted each player to improve in their own way. As a first year coach, Vroman said, "We faced many challenges, but it was nothing we couldn't handle."

There were many injuries throughout the team towards the end of the year. "Having to find players to play positions they don't usually play was difficult," Vroman explained.

Senior, Addison Bomelyn said that playing through injuries was a challenge that was hard to overcome. Bomelyn said the coaching change "impacted the team because they have different coaching styles, and change is hard for some people to adapt to." Bomelyn's favorite memory was doing a handshake before every game with Olivia Samuelson.

Vroman said, "The Girls Soccer program always perseveres and works harder than any other team in the Conference." With that confidence, the Vroman era of Rocky Soccer is sure to be a successful one.

Denise Carr
"Being able to lead the team was truly an honor to me. I loved being there for my teammates, and helping them throughout the games and practices," Carr said. There was pressure being a captain, being down a goal, and everyone's heads being down, and Carr found it difficult leading the team, but always seemed to find a way to keep it positive. Carr's favorite memory was Senior Night, and being able to play with the team for one last time.

OUR → *way*

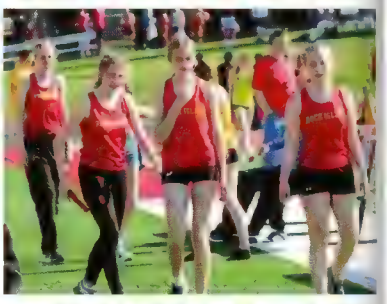
"Our way is working together as a family. Working together towards the same goal helped us bond together. We help each other with our weaknesses, and celebrate each other's strengths."
- Delaney Carroll

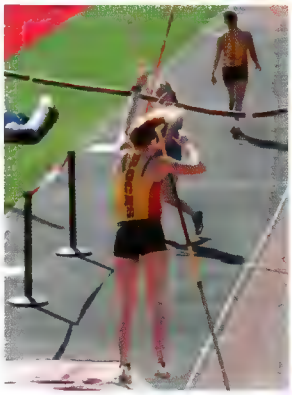
PASSING
the baton

Head Coach of Girls Track and Field of 4 years, Briana Nelson has made a tough decision to step down to allow for more time and energy to give to her family.

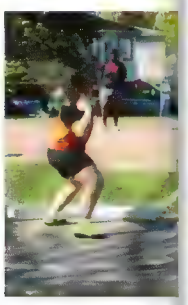
She would like to leave her team with encouragement, telling them to, "Continue to learn and grow," but also reminds them to be open minded with having a new coach. She explains that, "Learning styles, techniques, and strategies are different from person to person." Finally, she says to trust that the coach will continue to take them to new heights.

Coach Nelson says that she will miss her relationships with her athletes and current staff she's had over the years. She emphasizes, "When you coach, you spend so much time with them that they, too, become a part of a family."

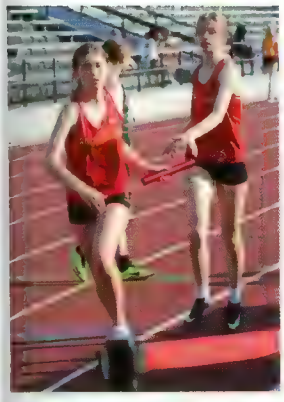


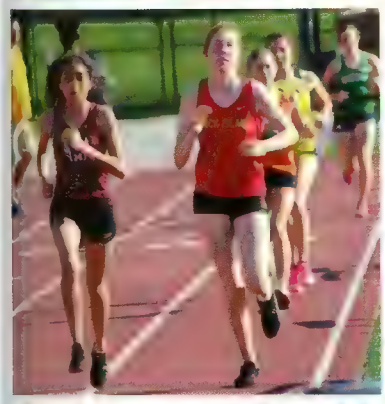


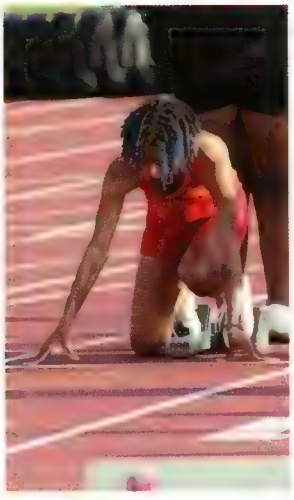
Coach Eddie emphasizes the importance of pole vault by stating, "It embodies key parts of every other event. To pole vault, you need the speed of a sprinter, the endurance of a d stance runner, the strength of a thrower, and the balance and coordination of a jumper."



"Shot put and discus are one of the first events at a track meet, and it gives us the power to set off a chain reaction for our team. Depending on our performance and mood, we can affect the dynamic of the team."
- Coach Pugh







ANOTHER LAP

The team's goals for the season were to consistently get better and reach new personal records, or PR's. Coach Nelson proudly stated, "Almost every girl on the team had a PR by the end of the season." Since coming back from COVID, the Lady Rocks have won the Western Illinois University Invitational for two years, back to back.

With this group of girls, there were plenty of leaders, and some impactful seniors, who really stood out, including, Ava Dietz, Arianna Matthews, Mackenzie Meirhaeghe, and Alyce Jett Ryan. Juniors, Norah Wright and Cheyeane Stanley also proved to be leaders for the Rocks. Newcomers, JaMarrie Lee, Jaydah Mitchell, Earraya Williams, Ameena Ross, and Amine Gay competed at a top level to start their RIHS Track careers.

Coach Yeager states, "Distance in track always seems to be an after thought to spectators at a meet. But when people watch distance runners crying, puking, and running with all their heart, that's what earns people's respect."

Coach Singleton explains, "Long Jump, Triple Jump, and High Jump are important pieces of track because it takes physical stamina and endurance to compete at a high level, along with mental focus to be able to, not only run fast, but also concentrate on specific details to help you jump higher and further."

DIFFERENCES

Sometimes, field events, and even distance events, are overlooked. These specialty coaches explain why each event is just as important to a team win.

OUR → way

"As athletes, we push ourselves to achieve higher. But as track athletes, it gives us opportunities to compete and prove 'our way' to success, with not just ourselves, but as a team, with passion and pride."
- Keziah Anderson

NEW *beginning*

Last season, the Lady Rocks Softball Team had a young line up, with one senior, Alexis Carroll. Also new to the team was first year Varsity Coach Julie Hudnall. Hudnall stated, "Moving from JV to Varsity was not easy- but I had a great leader, who was there to help with any questions that I had." During her rookie year leading the Lady Rocks, Hudnall stated, "My favorite part about my first year was seeing the growth we made as a team."

Sophomore Jozie Kerr was a huge part of the Lady Rocks Team, while catching most games. "Overall, I felt very reliable. I knew I needed to step up for the team, with the challenging spot we got left in. At the end of the season, I definitely was starting to feel the burn out of it all, but my teammates really helped with staying positive, and still loving the game." While enjoying the game is a main part of the sport, being able to be serious and calm at the same time is important. Kerr explained this challenge, stating, "I think my hardest game would've been against West Central because we all struggled together as a team."

Hudnall had high expectations for her girls this season. She stated, "I wanted to continue the legacy that I was left, but also put my own spin and stamp on it. Winning the WB6 Title was a lofty goal, being as young as we were, and with other senior leaden teams, but I feel like we gave it our best each night." Kerr stated, "I wanted us to do our best, which I definitely think we did, but I also wanted to have fun, and not worry about any bad games."

VARSITY TEAM

FRESHMAN/ JV TEAM

OUR → *way*

"I would say one thing we do our way is building a relationship between our pitchers and catchers. As a pitcher, we try to make a habit of saying, 'Thank you,' after every time the catchers catch us, especially since catchers are overlooked a lot. Another is that we have a role after home games. Some girls rake the infield, while some take down the flag, and the rest put equipment away. When we each contribute to the overall job, it gets done much faster."
- Madison Carroll

FRESHMEN *on varsity*

"Being a freshman on Varsity was exciting. I felt like their little baby. Our bond was something that I can't compare to anything. That team is something I will cherish for a very long time. They all pushed me to be my best, and that experience taught me that I have to work for my spot, it's not just earned."
- Mallory Hudnall

"It definitely was a big step as a freshman. I felt that I needed to try even harder to show that I should be there, and I feel like the girls made it easier since they were all so supporting and really helpful. I would play with those girls forever because of how great they were."
- Daniella Leahy

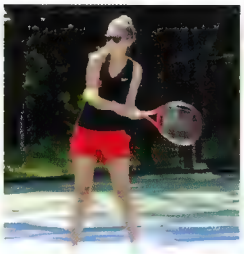
LADY ROCKS *traditions*

FIRST YEAR *varsity* COACH

"I think the thing that is the most different is the game moves a lot faster. You have to be prepared for many more situations, and really have to make sure you talk through situations, as things happen at a faster pace. My favorite aspects of coaching Varsity are getting to know the athletes, pushing them to get better, and be good teammates."
- Coach Julie Hudnall

OUR way

"For me 'our way' in tennis is the way we support one another. Tennis can be very challenging because it's one of the few sports where you can only rely on yourself. I love the group of girls I was stuck with this year because they were the most supportive group of individuals. Being able to cheer on one another helps more than one would think."
Naima Rogers



GIRLS TENNIS rocks THIS SZN

2023

"The family bond we have is definitely a lot closer than last year. We coexist as a team, and actually have everyone supporting each other. Last year, we were a team, but not everyone acted like it."

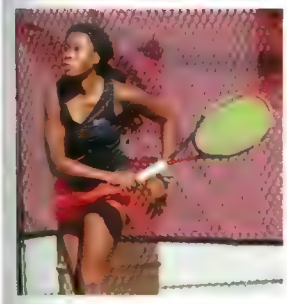
Alayna McKinley, 12

"I think my favorite part is the friendships I've made from tennis, and how it's given me so many important life lessons. I think this year, we are all more involved as a team, and committed to the sport more."

Elaina Adlfinger, Grade 11

"I like winning and celebrating with the team. I think this year, I am more confident while I'm playing."

Averi Vroman, Grade 10



LAST YEAR *captains*

"I wanted to be a captain because I am very approachable and thoughtful, which would be easy for people to talk to me. My teammates have voted for me, since I am a very fun and friendly person."
Man Nuam

"I wanted to be a captain because I feel like I am a great person someone can come to for help. I am a supportive, and overall, positive person. This is why my teammates, as well as coach, voted for me."
- Alayna McKinley

A RETURN TO *state*

While the 2023 tennis season had its challenges, the Lady Rocks ended with sending an athlete to State! Tennis Coach Christopher Gabany explained that the hardest part of the season was always navigating the weather, and hoping it cooperated. Beyond that, he said there was a tough stretch late in the season, when the team had a lot of matches close to each other, and had to deal with a surplus of injuries to some key players. This included the team captains and seniors, Alayna McKinley and Man Nuam.

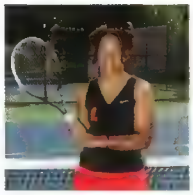
Gabany's main goal for the team was to "Always improve, and be better by the end of the season than we were in the beginning," which he said the team did achieve. "Beyond that are the end of the season goals, such as Conference, Sectionals, and the State Tournament. Overall, we were 6-3 in dual meets, and we did have a State qualifier in singles (Neima Rogers). We only had two losses to Conference opponents. We lost our meet against Moline, and against Geneseo," Gabany explained.

Gabany explained the best moment of the season was qualifying for State for the first time in several years. And, with Rogers qualifying as a sophomore, the future of Rocky Tennis is bright!

NEW *faces*

The Lady Rocks featured a few newcomers this season, two of which were seniors.

"Tennis was never one of my interests. I figured I could use it to meet people, and it would be fun to learn something new."
Zoe Fuller, Grade 9



"It feels great to be a part of the team, and being able to meet new people. Learning tennis is kind of hard because it's not the sport I'm used to, but it's become fun to play, now that I know more about it. The reason I played tennis is because I didn't want to play just one sport my senior year, and I wanted to step outside my comfort zone."
DeNaijah Cartright, Grade 12

"It feels great being a part of something I didn't see coming. I really enjoy tennis, as this is my first year playing. I've met so many amazing people during this journey. I really wanted to try something new my senior year, and explore other sports and hobbies besides basketball. It was the best decision I've made, so far."
Giselle Aceviz, Grade 12

"The difference this year is that we are more focused and communicating as a team."
Man Nuam, Grade 12

"What's different from last year is the team's mindset. Everyone goes on to the court and fights. Win or lose, they always do their best."
Neima Rogers, Grade 10

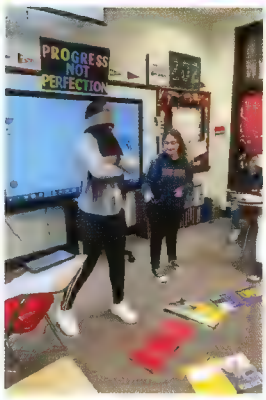
"This year is better because we're all closer, and the support system we have within each other is stronger. We have better relationships with each other, and we're more connected and stronger as a team."
Leah Kitterman, Grade 11

"All of our ideas. Everyone always has great ideas, and it gives us more to learn about, and to me, it's inspiring to hear about roles or jobs that women are part of! Being in the Rocky Riveters has really opened my eyes and interest to women's empowerment."
- Avery Hanson

"So, when you put time and effort into Color Guard, it can really push the group to become better. Even though Color Guard is a ton of time, and a ton of work, it is so worth it."
- Quinn Feigley

"My dedication has impacted me and the group, as a whole, because it has made us come together, and it feels more like a family than just an after school group. It also impacts others to learn to be comfortable on expressing their culture, or learning about a new one."
- Alejandra Zetina

OUR dedication



Our dedication at Rock Island High School branches from many clubs and activities. Each of us plays a role in our groups, and with our dedication, we strive to make Rocky great in all ways.

ROCK ISLAND CLUBS & ORGANIZATIONS

CHAMBER ORCHESTRA gives their note

"For me, being in Chamber Orchestra means being able to continue my music education at a higher level. It's also great being someone that our new 6th graders and middle schoolers can look up to."
- Ethan Ignatius, Violist, 10

"Being a senior in our most advanced orchestra makes me feel like I've definitely made a mark in our program over the past 7 years. It's been an honor and a privilege to be a part of this department."
- Julio Ramirez, Violist, 12

"To me, being the most advanced means that I have achieved one of my personal goals. It also means that I am someone people can look up to, and be able to reach out to. It's truly an honor."
- Haley Gruner, Violinist, 12

"I feel like it's a privilege and an honor to play at our highest level. Not only does it advance my skills, it also advances my knowledge on music and music theory. It helped with my shyness, and grew my ability to play in front of people!"
- Merrell Mars, Violinist, 10

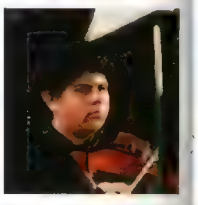
"It's a lot of fun being a part of an ensemble. Being involved has made me make some friends throughout the years of being in this program."
- Joy Kitterman, Bassist, 12

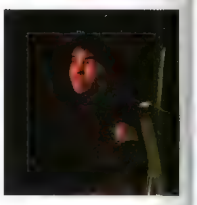
Rock Island High School orchestras

Orchestra has a brand new director this year. This is Mr. Cameron Kotovsky's first year of being Rock Island High School's Orchestra Director, although he has been in the district before this.

While Orchestra is an elective, in any music class, there is still a strong academic component to the course. From learning about music theory and the instrument, a person also learns lessons about themselves. "While as an academic class, we are always looking for growth in their music knowledge and playing skills, I really look at their growth as people for an indicator of their development. They have all shown an ability to grow as leaders, communicators, mentors, and friends," says Kotovsky.

Orchestra has had various directors these past couple of years, which can be a difficult adjustment. "Although I do miss our old directors, I look at it as a bond to build with a teacher, and one I can learn new things from," says Wyatt Bunch (11), a Violist in Concert Orchestra. "Every director you come across comes from a different background, different education, and a different story. Because of that, they all teach differently, and we can learn something from all of them," said Bunch. Even Kotovsky has realized how much of a challenge these changes can be on students, stating, "I think the biggest challenge for the groups has been not only having a new director for the 3rd time in 3 years, but also coming from different places in their musical journeys. The students have done an amazing job of not only helping me feel welcome, but growing together, and working towards a common goal."





"It's honestly a bigger pay off than you would guess it would be. I get to surround myself with people who are as passionate as I am about music, and I can learn more from the upperclassmen. It's such a great experience!"

- Susan Rodriguez, Violinist, 9

"It's an amazing feeling to have 20-30 other people who are as dedicated to music as I am around me. I would say that it's truly an honor to work with my classmates. It hasn't been an easy journey to get here, but every step was worth it!"

- Amelia Heine, Violist, 9

fANTASTIC fruit years

i can B-NATURAL with you

"Our friendship is so special because we've been though so much together in this department, for so many years together, and have made that bond!"

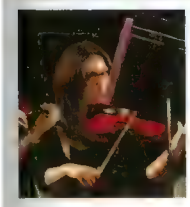
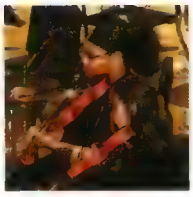
- Julio Ramirez & Alice McConchie

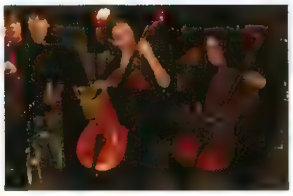
"Our friendship is so special because it goes outside of Orchestra. We also do shows together at Rocky and at the Center for Living Arts in Rock Island."

- Stella Houk & Joy Kitterman

"What's special about our friendship is that we bonded over playing music, and have stayed good friends in Orchestra together ever since."

- Merrell Mars & Ethan Ignatius

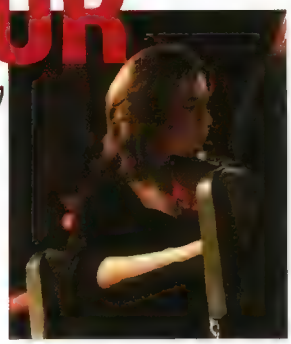





OUR conductor

"Orchestra, and visual/ performing arts in general, gives students a place to find their voice. A place to feel comfortable being themselves and enjoy the camaraderie of fellow musicians. Every one of my students has a story to tell, and comes from the most diverse of backgrounds. Being a part of that fellowship, and helping these students grow into wonderful musicians, and even more amazing people is all any teacher can ask of in this world, and I am honored every day to be a part of that."
- Mr. K

OUR way



"Our whole Orchestra puts in so much work into our pieces. Fixing things throughout rehearsals makes it so we can play beautiful music for people at the end of each quarter!"
- Mary Stockdale, Violinist, 12

Second Period Journalism Class

Second Period Editors

Third Period Journalism Class

Third Period Editors

Jammin' Journalists

TELLING *your stories*

For the first time in a while, Mrs. Vens has a big group of eager and enthusiastic journalists again. Mrs. Sarah Vens has been the head of Rocky Journalism for 15 years, which encountered more challenges than ever before during COVID 19.

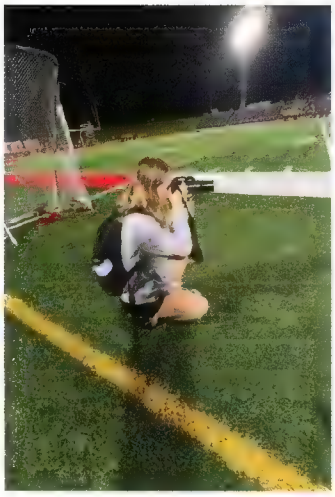
Mrs. Vens now has two full classes of students, ready to tackle many yearbook related tasks. Vens expressed that "having more students enrolled in the course makes the work easier and more manageable for everyone because we aren't relying on the same students to do everything. More importantly though, I think we have more students who are engaged and excited about the class, so the work is easier because my Journalism students are more eager to take on the goals of the class."

Similarly, Cienna Reed said, "It's not a difficult class to keep up with, you just need to stay on task, and not wait until the last minute. If you get stuck on an idea, there is guaranteed to be someone in the class to help you." Reed is a first year, Senior Editor with regrets of not taking Journalism the year before. Reed stated, "I do wish I took Journalism last year. I've enjoyed having creative freedom to express my structural ideas for a yearbook that has been recognized as one of the best in the country. I have also created bonds with people I never would've imagined having a bond with." Reed is one of the prime examples of student editors that Vens looks for.

Vens said, "I look for students who are hard workers, responsible, and trustworthy. I like to have a variety of students in the class. Some are shy, and I hope the class helps them break out of their shells. Some are already leaders, and the class is a good outlet for them. I try to recruit kids who I see a lot of leadership and creative potential in, and hope that the class allows them to see those qualities in themselves, too."

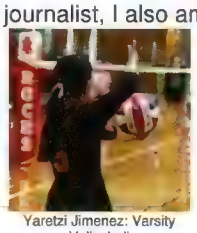
OUR → *way*

"Journalism isn't just putting the yearbook together. You get creative freedom to figure out what you love to do, while sharing the stories of others, and what they love to do."
- Katie Voss



I'm not just a journalist, I also am involved in...

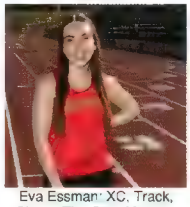
Bailey Snoll: Bowling and Choir



Yaretzi Jimenez: Varsity Volleyball

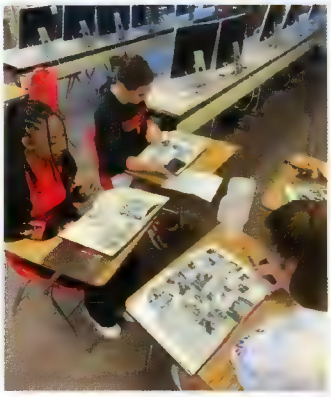
Alexa Massie: Cheer, StuCo, and The Gray Matters

Jozie Kerr: Golf, Softball, Student Ambassadors, Student Athletic Council, and StuCo



Eva Essman: XC, Track, Cheer, The Gray Matters, StuCo, and the Fellowship of Christian Athletes

Olivia Samuelson: Soccer and a kicker for the Football Team



The "Mastermind" Behind It All

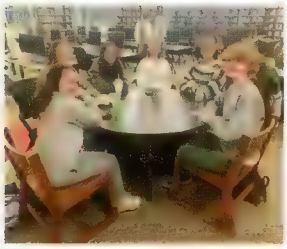
Mrs. Sarah Vens has been in charge of the Journalism class at Rock Island High School for 15 years. Over these years, Vens realized her favorite part, stating, "I think watching a student develop a passion for something they learn in Journalism is the coolest part of the class. I think there are a lot of useful skills in the class, but when you see a kid get excited about something, and really take off with it, that's the best part of teaching. I am confident in all of my students' talents, but to see them gain that confidence is the neatest part of my job."

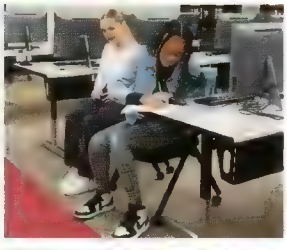
OUR SOCIAL MEDIA

Rock Island High School's Crimson Crier

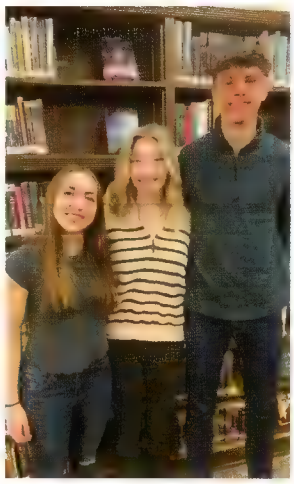
@rihsjournalism

The Crimson Crier
rockislandcrimsoncrier.org





NHS 2023-24 Senior Officers:
Eva Essman- Secretary, Presley Behrens- Vice President, Asa Mahn- President



NATIONAL HONOR society

The NHS Co-Advisor, Connie Hayek, discusses hopes, challenges, and memories within the group.

The NHS Co Advisor, Mrs. Connie Hayek said that she hopes the students in NHS "Gain the confidence in their ability and a greater appreciation by interacting in their community, and not just striving for academic success." Students get an invitation to be a part of NHS based on their grades, starting during their sophomore year. These students maintain their membership through their academics, as well as their dedication to community service.

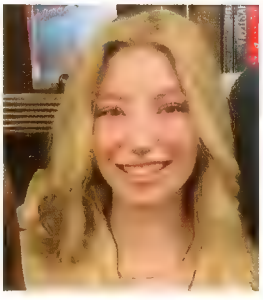
NHS members do have some challenges they regularly face, including finding times to meet, as the group is very diverse, and everyone has obligations with involvement with other activities. Mrs. Hayek stated, "We do the best we can to share information when members are unable to attend meetings."

The NHS members are involved in many different activities, and they have helped throughout the QCA, whether at the John Deere Classic, various sports clinics, soup kitchens, animal shelters, the Festival of Trees, Bald Eagle Days, Closet2Closet, and more. "Being involved, maintaining pillars of character, scholarship, service, and leadership are important, and our members have an opportunity to be pos tive examples of these traits, whether in school or the QCA," explained Hayek

Mrs. Hayek said one of her favorite memories is seeing their members recognized at the Induction Ceremony. Mrs. Hayek said that NHS members should "reflect strong character, leadership, scholarship, and service--whether people notice or not. It's not about trying to get the attention of others, to be noticed for the sake of acknowledgment; it's about doing what is right, at any time, for all people in our community."

OUR → way

"Our way for NHS members is to be leaders in our community. The way we succeed, carry ourselves, and continue to work hard is by remembering that we have the ability to bring people together, and create a positive example."
- Presley Behrens



iJAG *instructors*

Jimenez and Sharp set the standard for what Rocky's iJAG students need to accomplish each year.

"There are two main goals in IJAG: 1. To help students stay on the path towards graduation, and 2. To help them get ready for the real world after high school."
- Mickaela Jimenez

"We participate in fundraising, community service projects, and we have many visitors from the community."
- Craig Sharp

THE IMPACT *impact* OF IJAG

iJAG is a leadership program for hardworking students interested in developing skills that will help them be successful after high school. By participating in iJAG, they have an advantage, because employers trust that the students learned the necessary skills for the workforce. Therefore, students can learn how to buy a house, how to invest and save money, how to put together a fundraiser/ community service event, and even how to build a resume.

IJAG classes are split up by grade, with two different teachers. Mr. Sharp teaches the juniors and the seniors, and Ms. Jimenez teaches the freshmen and sophomores. Between the juniors and seniors, they have specific roles needed to be filled. Their leaders are Ro Armstrong, as well as Christah Butler. Mr. Sharp stated, "We have two main goals in IJAG- one is to help students graduate high school. The other is to be prepared for what comes after high school."

While Mr. Sharp only teaches juniors and seniors, Ms. Jimenez teaches the freshmen and sophomores. She explained what the students do in class, stating, "While our primary focus is exploring careers, we also teach 'adulting' skills. This may include how to buy a house, how to invest and save money, how to put together a fundraiser/ community service event, how to network with other professionals, how to interview for a job, and how to build a resume. Some activities that would support these skills may be playing the Game of Life or Monopoly, having different employers participate in mock interviews with our students, and having our students organize a fundraiser for an end of the year field trip to Chicago."

IJAG *president*

"To be a fearless leader, you have to have a fearless team. It is a great responsibility, and I handle it well."
- Ro Armstrong, 12

OUR *way*

"Our way is getting the opportunity to learn the path you can take after high school."
- Jada Jones

"I loved being able to be over dramatic and just over the top with everything, in general."

- Nyx King, 11

"My favorite aspect of *Pure As The Driven Snow* was making new friends, having fun, and putting on an enjoyable show for our audience."

- Kal Boswell, 12

"My favorite aspect of the show has to be how silly it is. Even when serious, it finds a way to be funny."

- Danny Hauskins, 11

BEHIND THE *curtain*

PURE AS THE DRIVEN SNOW

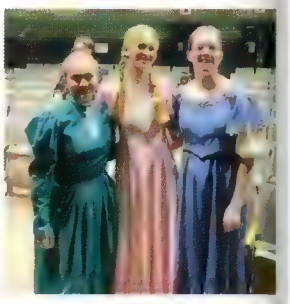
a working girl's secret

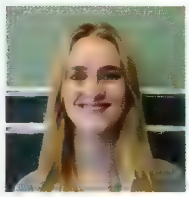
Curtains up in Uland Inn! Rock Island High School's 2023 Fall Play was an old timey melodrama titled, *Pure As The Driven Snow*. The story tells of a young girl named Purity Dean, who runs into some very interesting characters, finds love, battles a very persistent villain, and enjoys an unsuspecting plot twist.

Mrs. Foster, the Director of Rocky's Theater Department, was proud of the leadership amongst her students, who put on the show. She stated that Zee Phares (11), Adrian Mills (10), Yessenia Leos Ochoa (11), and Emily O'Brien (11) were particularly helpful leaders this year. "When it came to tech, we could always lean on them to get things done," she stated. Foster explained costuming, stating, "It was challenging to find costumes that fit the actor, fit the character, and were easy to transport in the instance we made State. It was also difficult to stay true to everyone's color palette. We specifically designed and found pieces that fit the character, their energy, and so that everyone had their own individual color."

Despite the challenges, things weren't too bad in the Uland Inn. Rock Island High School was selected to perform at the Illinois High School Theater Festival! Their cast and crew had 3 festival responders from various schools and colleges come see a run through of the show. They didn't just judge the acting, but they took into account the set, costumes, lighting, and sound. Thom Elliott (11) explained the rush of emotions when the news was revealed to them on closing night during bows, stating, "It was honestly a much bigger pay off than I ever would have dreamed of. From seeing the entire process start, to where we made it now is absolutely unreal."

This January, at the Illinois High School Theater Fest, Rocky has been scheduled to perform two shows. This is a unique opportunity for the Rocks, and one that the whole school is proud of.





"I thought that painting was super fun. I also loved seeing all of the costumes and the set design come together."

- Kayla Mathews, 11

"I really enjoyed decorating the set. There were so many little details that really made the show."

- Zach Hansen, 10

"The greatest thing to work on was the wood drilling, and building better friendships. Sometimes, it's just nice to share a laugh with people you have similarities with."

- Shee Ler Moo, 10

"My favorite thing about *Pure As The Driven Snow* is that it's different than any other show we've done, like the complex costuming, intricate set, and just the show itself is just very special to me."

- Adrian Mills, 10

"I loved how you were taken back in time by the set design."

- Carly LeMaster, 12

"My favorite aspect of this play is how dramatic it is. Everyone's emotions are exaggerated, and it makes the show really funny."

- Zafirah Hassan, 12

"My favorite aspect of the play is the fact that it is just 1 set. It's cool how so many stories can happen in one setting."

- Morris Nunn, 11

"The fact that everyone is so friendly with each other as a company makes the process fun, lighthearted, and stress free. We're all just kind of one big family!"

- Kat Jacoby, 12

SPOTLIGHT ON *foster*

"It was fun telling a more complete story, and creating an elaborate set for the first time in a few years. And, the opportunity to take it to the State Festival has made the whole event more fulfilling."

- Mrs. Dorian Foster

OUR FAVORITE *moments*

"I played Aaron Samuels in the cast. My favorite part about the show was the choreography we got to learn. It was really fun to perform."

- Kylen Brozovich, 12

"I played the clarinet in the pit. My favorite scene was right before 'Someone Gets Hurt Reprise', when Damien is backing up his scooter, and it's beeping. It was just really funny."

- Zoe Ehlers, 11

"I play Gretchen Weiners in the cast, and my favorite part was just the entire process. It was really nice to hang out with cool people, and make fun memories."

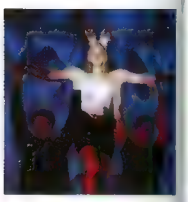
- Carly LeMaster, 12

"I play the flute in our pit. I'd say my favorite part of the show was playing the little flute part in 'Stop!'"

- Ash Campbell, 10

"I played Cady Heron. And, although it's basic, but the connections I got to make with people was the best part. Our Theater Department is, honestly, like my family."

- Nyx King, 11



OUR → way

"Our way of performing is by having a live pit. I feel like it's unique to us because a lot of places use instrumental tracks, but we don't."
- Joy Kitterman, 12

"My favorite part of being on tech was getting to build things I haven't built before, and getting new experiences. Building the benches was really fun to build, too."

- Zee Phares, 11

"My favorite part about being on tech is seeing it all come together in the end. It is different than what I'm used to, and that's what I like most about it."

- Adrian Mills, 10

"My favorite part about being on tech is that it gives me stuff to do after school. I really like the sense of community, and how I can learn skills, like how to use tools and teamwork."

- Caydence Johnson-Scriver, 11

"I know that it can be hard to come together and problem solve, but I enjoy working with my friends and new people for something bigger, even if it is behind the scenes."

- Aunah Jones, 11

OUR DIRECTOR
direction

"Since it's so new and such a different style of what we're used to, I really wanted to live up to the hype. And, personally, I think we did."
- Mrs. Dorian Foster

MEAN GIRLS
the musical

Rocky puts on "Mean Girls"? That is so fetch! One of the most new age and recent shows of Broadway today, "Mean Girls", released their high school version in September of 2022. A musical version of the 2004 movie, which was based on "Queenbees and Wannabes" written by Rosalind Wiseman, makes the show enticing and catches the eyes of many teenagers and adults. Rock Island High School was one of the first high schools in the country to put it on, which is a great honor.

"Mean Girls" is full of drama, romance, and comedy. The show had incredibly talented hard-workers. This is true for actors, tech, musicians, and directors. From making lunch tables for many different cliques to making Regina Georges' chic room, with an entire bed frame, the very talented stage manager, Zee Phares elaborated on how he felt throughout the entire process. "I honestly was a bit nervous about commitment levels in the beginning of the show," said Phares. "But once it got going, I had faith in everyone." Tech had loads of work to do in order for the production to be eye-catching and memorable.

The cast also took advantage of their unique opportunity to put on such a new show. Their dancing, singing, and acting kept the audience entertained. It was a difficult task, but an exciting one. "For me, dancing was really difficult," said Stella Houk. "But singing was my favorite part." Actors have a lot of pressure while performing in front of an audience, however, they always do an incredible job.

Directors, like Mrs. Foster, had a huge task of getting everything in order on and off stage. Foster had a difficult job of picking out the show, as well. "Picking a show is torture, and it's hard," said Foster. "I want to pick a show that's challenging, and will help us grow. But at the same time, I want to pick something that will suit the group that we have as best as possible. Plus, I have to balance that with our vocal levels." All of these variables can make the process hard, however, Foster did an incredible job with picking "Mean Girls, the Musical" for her department.

OUR TRADITIONS
our traditions

"They were definitely different from what I am used to. I'd have to say my favorite tradition is playing lap tag at the final after party. It's really fun (even if it's a tad bit dangerous...)."

- Jackie Davis, 10

"I think Rocky's theater traditions are unique to our community. They really help us get our heads together before a show. My favorite is circle because we can talk about our appreciations and memories."

- Keni Bennett, 10

"I thought they were pretty charming. I liked circle because it was fun hearing everyone's memories."

- Easter Naing, 10

"Coming in, I honestly didn't know what to expect. I just took them in stride, and grew to love them. I'd say my favorite is woo's after shows!"

- Alex VandeWalle, 10

"Our traditions are interesting, and I enjoy them a lot. Even though this isn't Rocky specific, I do think saying 'Break A Leg' is pretty funny."

- Shee Ler Moo, 10

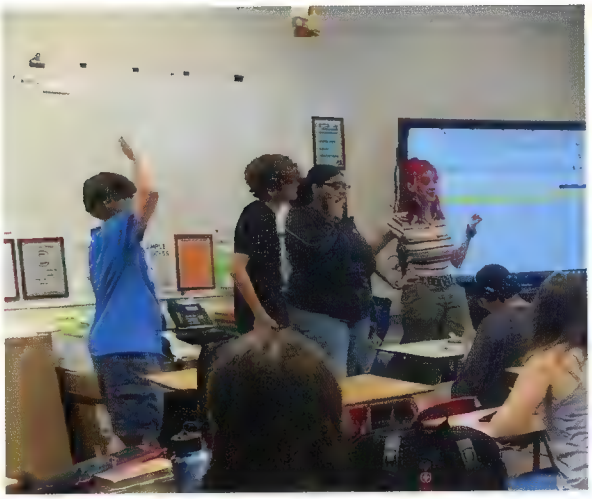
"I thought the traditions were really fun. My favorite tradition is when we do circle before each show. Though it's a little sad, I think everyone has a fun time."

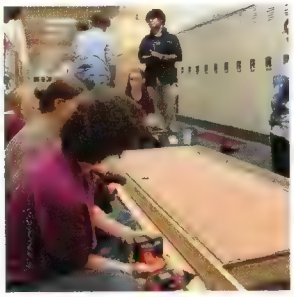
- Zaynah Hassan, 10

TAKING *the* LEAD

Drama Club is a diverse and popular extracurricular group that consists of Mrs. Foster, the director, and a student-led Drama Board, who is also student-elected. Foster stated, "Traditions don't work unless people buy in. Some of the best things have been created by students." Students drive the activities of the Drama Club every year, and bring life to the program. Every year, the Drama Club puts on a Fall Play and a Spring Musical, along with other smaller activities, like fundraisers and productions.

There's a place for everyone in Drama, even if they don't like the idea of being on stage. Along with actors, there's always work to be done behind the scenes. Foster explained, "There's a lot to do that few people understand. I'm not like Ken in the Barbie movie. I don't do 'direct' like Ken does 'beach.' A lot has to happen from start to finish that I'm responsible for." There's so much that goes into a single production. Caydence Johnson-Scriver, a junior in tech, said, "Drama Club is more than just acting. There's the Tech Crew, where we work on the set, costumes, props, sounds, lighting, and so much more. We help make the show, with the actors, of course." Tech works hard to make sure that actors have the tools that they need to perform for their audiences. It's a large collaborative effort that always pays off to see in the end. Drama Club is the perfect group for people to find a place to belong.





"I love Rock Island High School's Drama Club. I think it is a really great place for everyone, even freshmen, like me. I am so glad that I joined Drama Club, and met Mrs Foster, and people like me. I have plans to continue all four years of Drama Club."
- Alaina Bonja, 9

"As a senior in Drama Club, I think it is a great way to meet new people and make friends. Sadly, I was not able to do the program all four years because of COVID-19, but if I had the chance to, I definitely would've!"
- Zafiran Hassan, 12

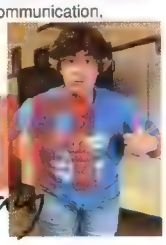
OUT WITH THE OLD *in with the new*

"I get to collaborate with my friends to create a community that people love to be in. My favorite part is probably helping lead meetings."
- Angelina Nocentelli, 11

"I love being able to work with people that have a passion for theater like I do. Being on the board is definitely one of my favorite things I've gotten involved in."
- Nyx King, 11

"I love doing what I do, and the people I get to do such amazing things with."
- Thom Elliott, 11

"I think our way in Drama Club is learning how to succeed later on in life through the various skills learned in the club. We learn communication, problem-solving, and teamwork skills."
- Zee Phares



OUR → way

"I love watching students grow as creators and people. Many students keep me updated long after they graduate. It's like an extended family."
- Mrs. Foster

"Being on the board is a lot more fun than it might seem. My favorite part is being able to come up with fun ideas for the club."
Zee Phares, 11

STUDENTS *in the lead*

OUR STORY

The Reading Rocks Book Club meets every few weeks in an intimate circle of chairs to discuss one book at a time from the 2023 Illinois Lincoln Award book list. Near the end of third quarter, if you finish 4 books off of the list, you're invited to a voting party to help decide what author wins the 2023 Illinois Lincoln Award. Mrs. Mendelin, one of the club advisors, explained, "I love that this club is open to any student at Rocky. It represents a diverse array of students across grade levels, social groups and interests. People get to meet others that they might never have met."

This year's voting party was a lively event with snacks and laughter. In order to get an accurate vote, each student present is given the opportunity to first, name their favorite book off the list, and then advocate for why their pick should be voted for the award.

Everyone's differing opinions and values could be conflicting, but for the Reading Rocks, diversity is what makes their book club beautiful. Mrs. Mendelin hopes that the impact of the club goes far beyond what the students read. She stated, "I hope students remember how rewarding it is to read books and discuss them with other people. Sometimes we disagree on a book's ideas or its quality. I hope the students in the club remember that disagreeing with someone doesn't mean we can't like that person. Also, I hope students realize how books can bring people together. Even if you don't know someone at all, if you have read the same book, you already have something in common. Books can be a common ground and an equalizer. They can bring us closer to each other, as humans, even if we have our differences."

OUR way

"I love hearing the different ways and different perspectives everyone takes away from the book."
- Megan Mason

READING Rocks

DIGGING DEEPER

EAC digs deep to find new ways to help the environment.

The Environmental Action Club focuses on the importance of taking action to protect the environment. The club includes doing different projects or field trips to learn and apply that information when taking action.

The club advisor is Mr. Dunker, who is a teacher within the building. Mr. Dunker expressed how important this club is, not just to follow up with his own beliefs of taking action to save the environment, but also to the students themselves. "We provide an opportunity for students to connect with the community and the world. We give them a voice and leadership opportunities with their peers," he stated.

EAC does different projects and field trips throughout the year. Mr. Dunker explained, "Typically, we participate in 20-30+ activities. The consistent activities include: handing out candy bags at the HOCO Parade, as well as volunteering at Bald Eagle Days and The Outdoor Show for the Quad Cities Conservation Center. We also pick up Rocky and local neighborhoods and parks multiple times a year. Last year, we started going on field trips. We went kayaking and fishing."

In addition, Club President Olivia Seidlitz added, "My favorite part of being in the club is probably the fun field trips we get to take. We have a lot of fun." Seidlitz also mentioned, "I think more people should join EAC to help make their area a better place." Seidlitz noted that the club made her more aware of her influence on the environment locally. "The club has really had an impact on how I view the world around me. It makes me a lot more conscious of how I treat the environment," Seidlitz stated.

keeping it CLEAN

Meet Environmental Action Club's Student Leaders!

"I'm the President of the EAC. I joined to try and help our school build a cleaner community. I hope that this year, we can get a lot done, and help programs like ours."
- Olivia Seidlitz, 10

"I'm the Secretary of EAC, and I joined the club because I think preserving our environment is an extremely important and overlooked issue."
- Claire O'Hern-Maidak, 10

"I'm the Treasurer, and I keep count of money. Due to being an officer, I also help organize events, and see what the club wants to do."
- Averi Vroman, 10

OUR way

"Our way is having compassion for the environment."
- Olivia Seidlitz, 10

"I believe in protecting the environment, and following up in action with my beliefs."
- Mr. Dunker

LEADING the FUTURE

"I'm looking forward to getting to do more school and neighborhood pick ups!"
- Claire O'Hern-Maidak, 10

"I'm excited about working on butterfly gardens because they're my favorite insect. Also, because it might help the school look prettier."
- Averi Vroman, 10

planting PLANTING PROJECTS projects

Members of the club share what they're most looking forward to doing with the club.

"Going on hikes for field trips to learn more about nature and the environment."
- Zachary Hansen, 10

OUR → way

"Our way is service, service, service."
- Mr. Behnke

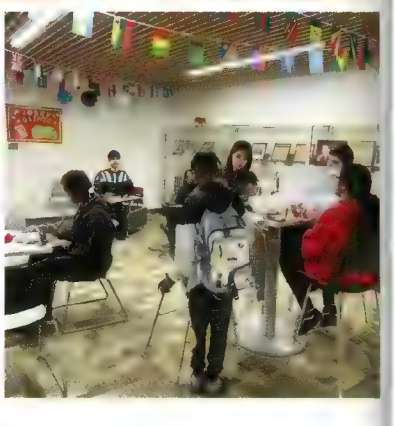
PURPOSE DRIVEN *to promote greatness*

The Rotary Club is a community service organization, led by Rock Island High School teacher, Mr. Lonnie Behnke. According to Mr. Behnke, some of the goals that this group aims for are, "To serve the school, our community, and the world. We have funded and run the Pride Store and Fun Fridays for our school. We have assisted the Rock Island Rotary with community events. We have raised enough money to buy a water filter for a 3rd world country through Rotary International."

Although this is a club all about helping, it does come with a handful of its own challenges. One being, "Trying to find a time when everyone can meet together," explained Behnke. The group has recently been meeting on Fridays during advisory.

Mr. Behnke hopes to instill "A sense of belonging and growing the seed of service" in the members of the group. He does, however, get help from his student leaders, President Kal Boswell and Vice President Olivia Harms. Olivia has also made a strong impression because she is a newcomer to the group this year, along with Laura Avalos.

The Rotary Club has led and been a part of many activities, in and out of school. Behnke explained, "We have marched in parades with the Rock Island Rotary Club, participated as a team for the Rotary Trivia Night to raise funds for community projects, and we will also be having a talent show later in the year." But with all of those fun activities, Mr. Behnke said his favorite memory from this year will always be, "Students singing Christmas karaoke at the Fun Friday in December."



This year, Rocky's German Club continued their weekly meetings, full of learning about the culture and traditions of Germany. Mr. Eli, the club advisor, explained the club is "a fun way to use our German, learn new things, and play games together. My favorite part of the club is seeing the students enjoying each other's company."

Eli explained the group provides more than an additional educational opportunity. He hopes that it is "another after school option to hang out with their friends, and learn more about German."

The club offers many fun opportunities throughout the year, like "our holiday gift exchange and party," Eli stated. The group also learned about German holidays, like Oktoberfest, and how the German people celebrate holidays like Mardi Gras. However, Mr. Eli's favorite memory this year was, "When we made a Berlin Wall out of gummy bears."

The German Club celebrated Oktoberfest by learning about the history of the holiday and how Germans celebrate.

The German Club learned about German history, geography, and the one of Germany's favorite treats, the gummy bear!

German Club members recruit new members at the annual Rally at the Rock.

German Club meets in Mr. Eli's room each week. He displays countries where the language is spoken, where the group visits during their exchange, and many other posters of German culture.

OUR way

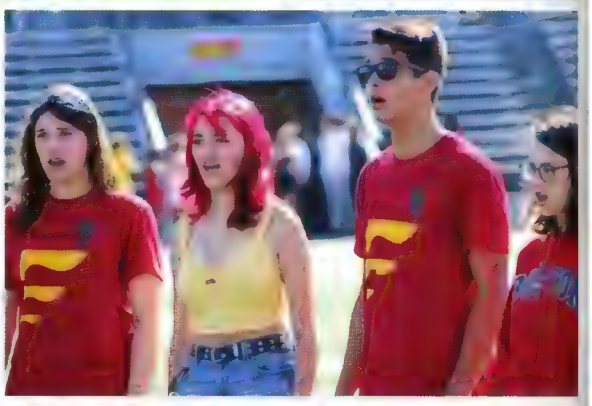
"Our Way in German Club is to find the beauty in German culture, and have fun learning about it."
- Hailey Stanley

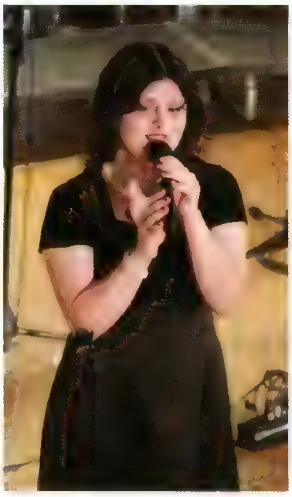
OUR → way

"We practice, memorize, and work as a team to make our music sound the best it can. We have to be united, and listen to each other, so that our voices blend. Other than concerts, we also sing at other gigs, especially during December, and competitions."
- Nyx King, 11

triad SINGER

"I've noticed how much my vocal abilities have grown after joining all three choruses. I needed to practice my singing when I first joined the Concert Choir, because I lacked confidence. I've always admired the Chamber Singers when I've been in Concert Choir, and have yearned to join them someday. It gives me a great sense of privilege to sing with them this year."
- Noemi Figueroa-Salinas, 11

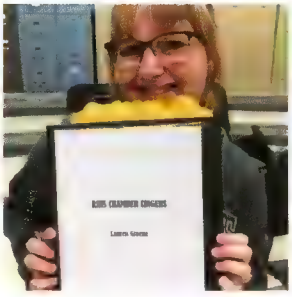




singing SENIORS

"I will miss working with some very talented musicians that I have been in the RIHS Chamber Singers with. It has been an honor to be a part of something so influential and meaningful to the community."
- Kal Boswell

"I will miss the connections and friendships I made purely through music."
- Lauren Groene



"I'm gonna miss the sense of community, which is similar to the theater, where everyone has an understanding of each other. Also, the concerts are fun."
- Kat Jacoby

"I will miss Chamber Choir's energy while performing songs together. When all the practice and hard work finally pays off, and we can just have fun singing."
- Carly LeMaster

"I will miss the new friendships I've made, and the new people I've met."
- Kylen Brozovich

"I'm gonna miss Mr.Voigt's sock reveal."
- Jonathan Brown

2024

CHOIR IS *our forte*

The Chamber Singers are Rock Island High School's top performing choir group, a group of talented young musicians, ready to take on any performance coming their way.

The Chamber Singers are a group of singers consisting of 18 students- 5 Sopranos, 5 Altos, 4 Tenors, and 4 Basses, who are selected through an audition process. The group is taught by Director Scott Voigt, and Assistant Director and Accompanist, Cheryl Bolt. The two help their students try to become the best singers they can be. "Chamber Singers, an award-winning, select group of students in grades 9-12, chosen by audition in the spring, are sought to perform throughout the Quad Cities area," described Mr. Voigt.

The Chamber Singers stay busy with performances throughout the school year. They started with a fall concert in the first quarter of school, then 20+ performances during the Christmas season, and a spring concert and contests, such as Solo and Ensemble, and the the IHSA Organizational Contest during the 3rd quarter. Lastly, for fourth quarter, they perform in the Pops Concert, a concert not only including singing, but dancing, as well.

The Chamber Singers had a very busy Christmas season, as the group went around the Quad City area to spread cheer and joy through singing. "Chamber Singers perform a 'holiday tour' in December, with a full program of up to 20 songs, and over 20 performances during the holiday season," explained Voigt. The Chamber Singers had a successful 2023 holiday tour, with 27 performances in all.

All past and current Chamber Singers worked extremely hard to be able to get where they are, and to have the reputation that they hold. Hard work comes with a reward. "They must pass memorization tests, and they must spend hours practicing, so they can perform at a high level," said Bolt. The Chamber Singers also had 7 AM practices, called Sectionals, during the first and third quarters. The students and directors all strive to work their hardest, and do their best to have perfect performances, but also to have fun, as well. "The Chamber Singers' journey has always been amazing. Each Chamber Choir is equally talented, but each choir has a unique sound and personality, as a group," Bolt explained. "I feel like we have got a real great thing going right now, which makes every day fun, and it's a real pleasure to see students continue to grow and enjoy one another, doing something we all love, which is making music together," said Voigt.

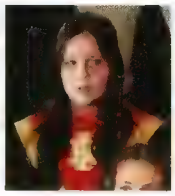
RIGHT FOR US "chor-us"

"I decided to take Choir because I love to sing and perform, and because I joined, I made many friendships."
- Christ Soe, 9, Concert Choir & Chamber Singers

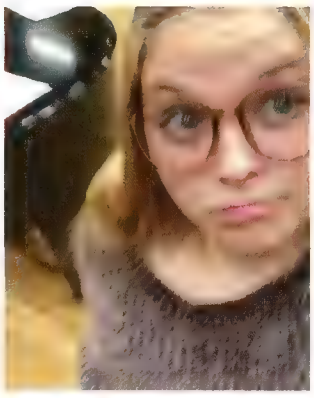
"I like it. It's a very welcoming community, and I have a lot of fun in this classroom."
- Kingston Haynie, 9, Concert Choir

"It's pretty cool."
- Lorenzo Marceleno, 9, Concert Choir

"At first, I thought it would be horrible for me, but with practice, it got way more fun, and it is currently the most fun class, and I look forward to be in it."
- Eh Nay Soe, 10, Concert Choir



OUR → way



"Our way, as a Choir, is many people's voices unify from very different places and perspectives, but Choir is a place for everyone, when you feel like there's no where else for you, and the people you meet there are amazing."
- Jada Brown, 10, Symphonic Choir

perfect PERFECT

"My favorite thing about choir is the amazing people, who are all so talented."
- Say Law Htoo, 9, Concert Choir

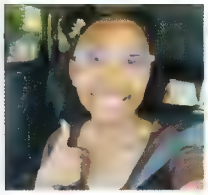
staying in harmony

The Concert and Symphonic Choirs are two of the three choirs here at Rock Island High School. All the choirs are taught by Director Scott Voigt, and Assistant Director/Accompanist, Cheryl Bolt.

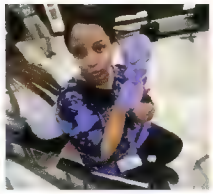
Concert Choir is a group comprised of mostly underclassmen, with a few upperclassmen, who have decided to stay in Concert, or who are completely new to choir. Concert Choir is the best choir to start in, if a student wants to get into singing, but does not have any prior experience, or if they just are looking for a fun and welcoming class to take. In Concert Choir, students are able to "Learn how to sing with others, focus on vocal techniques, and fundamentals of reading music," explained Scott Voigt. Concert Choir has a concert once a quarter, with the other two choirs. Each semester, Concert Choir gains new students, and most students always said they wished they joined sooner.

Symphonic Choir is the next choir that students go into when they feel that they are ready to advance their musical paths. "They have 7 AM rehearsals during at least 2 quarters of the year, and also sing with Chamber Singers in special events, such as assemblies and IHSA competitions, and QCO Solo and Ensemble events," explained Cheryl Bolt. It is usually the biggest of the three choir groups. Much like the Chamber Singers, Symphonic is also an auditioned group. The Symphonic Choir consists of mostly upperclassmen, with a sprinkle of a few underclassmen. Students in Symphonic Choir are students who have had prior singing experience, are ready for more, and ready to become even better singers.

Each choir at Rock Island High School has their own unique sound, and no choir is the same. "There are so many talented students in every choir," said Bolt. Both Voigt and Bolt hope to teach their students how to be able to harness and grow in a gift that they are born with. "More importantly, I believe it is important that students learn to develop confidence in themselves, and a skill that they can enjoy using (singing alone or with others!) for the rest of their lives," stated Voigt.

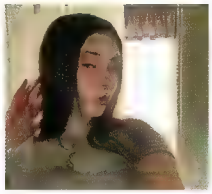


"I would say my favorite moment in Choir was when we were finally able to sing a hard part in one of our songs successfully, and everyone was happy, exited, and hyping each other up. These moments are always lasting moments for me."
- Travonna Ferguson, 11, Symphonic Choir



"My favorite moment in Choir was the first Choir concert of the year."
- Amiya Merrill, 11, Symphonic Choir

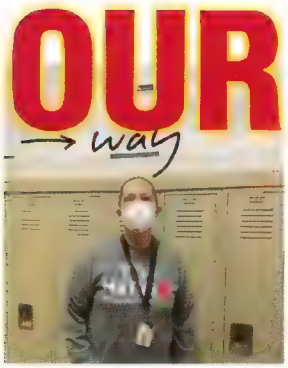
"My favorite moment in Choir was when I heard 'Christmas Isn't Christmas If It's Not With You' for the first time."
- Smay Rai, 12, Symphonic Choir



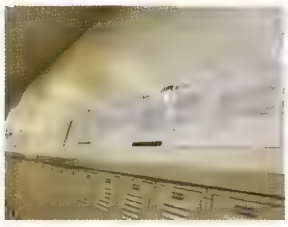
"My favorite moments have always been the Pops Concerts. It's fun to watch the dances, knowing how much time and effort went into them."
- Bailey Sholl, 12, Symphonic Choir

"My favorite moment in choir, this year, was when we figured out that we were going to sing 'On My Way' again."
- NJ Nocentelli, 11, Symphonic Choir

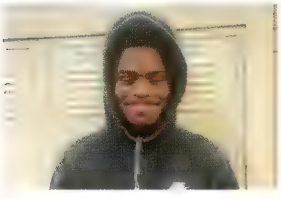
MOMENTS IN CHOIR ARE NEVER *flat*



"The AVID way is simply doing our best, with fidelity. We value progress over perfection."
- Mx. Johnson

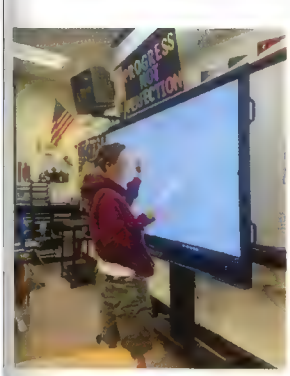


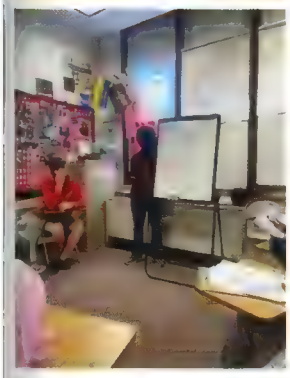
"I started hanging my students' acceptance letters outside of my room as a way to recognize all their hard work in the AVID Elective Program. Most of the AVID students have been working on their college dreams since seventh grade, so it's a nice way to showcase all of their hard work and dedication to their academics. It also motivates younger AVID students by showing them that all of the extra work they do for AVID, like focused note taking, and filling out TRF's is worth it."
- Mx. Johnson



"My favorite part about AVID is that it can help me become a better person, and it helps with organizational skills with my notes, binder, and also, life."
- Ja'Kai Lewis

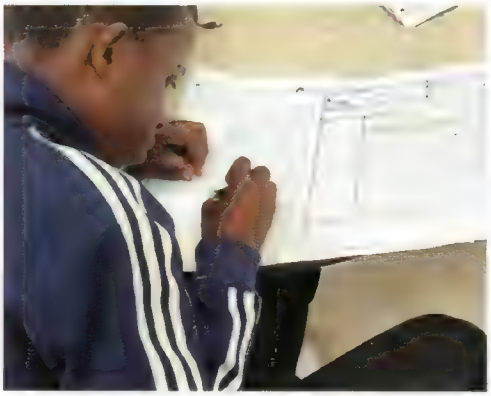
"I like how AVID improves my communication and social skills with people, and it also keeps me really organized!"
- Laura Avalos





"What I'll miss most about being an AVID student is probably presenting tutorials and fun Fridays."
- Laticia McCray

"Something I will miss about AVID are the connections I have made with my classmates and my teacher throughout my four years, as well as the fun games we play for collaboration."
- Fidelia Awoudi



A CRASH COURSE

in college

AVID is a very popular program at Rock Island High School, largely due to the leadership of Mx. Johnson, the AVID instructor. Johnson explained how much they love being the AVID teacher because they love helping students with organizational skills, and getting them ready for college. They stated, "I love being able to advocate for students, and to watch students reach their goals. I have the best job because I get to guide and advocate for students, who really strive to do their best in school."

AVID is a big help with a variety of courses, including AP and Honors classes. "AVID helps students find success in school, and helps students learn about organizing their thoughts, materials, and time. It helps them become critical thinkers and better readers and writers," explained Johnson. Every year, new relationships are made in class, and AVID brings students together with learning. "I love meeting new students, and watching students grow as critical thinkers. I'm lucky because I get to be with the AVID students all 4 years of high school, and I enjoy building relationships with them, and watching them build relationships with each other. It really is a big family. At the end of the year, all AVID students have a catered breakfast, and we all recognize our seniors and their college acceptances," explained Johnson.

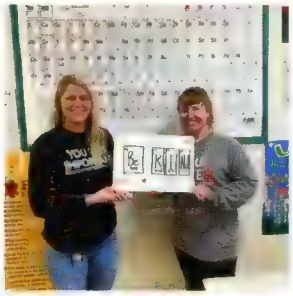
Learning new skills outside of school will help better students' education in all different classes. "The skills that students are taught in AVID helps them in every facet of their lives. Teaching AVID motivates me to learn about all of the resources available outside of school that can help students find success. AVID teaches students so much about how to be a strong student, and it helps students develop confidence in themselves," stated Johnson.

"My favorite part about being an AVID student has to be the fact that we were able to build long term relationships within the class."
- Kamya McDuffy

"One thing I like about AVID is the good learning habits I've gained for college."
- Alaina Kress

CULTURE FEST

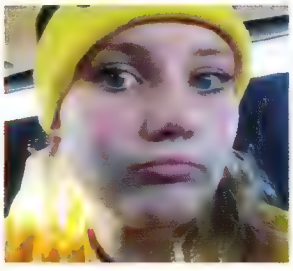
Last year, the Culture Club hosted an event called Culture Fest to celebrate the variety of cultures here at RIHS. One of their goals was to make everyone from different cultural backgrounds feel recognized and appreciated. The event was a huge success for the RIHS community. Culture Club strives to make all students feel included and welcomed, and Culture Fest celebrated all that Rocky students and staff value.



OUR MEMBERS

Eight members of the Culture Club stand in front of their first completed bulletin board of the year, "Holidays of the World", which discussed 14 different holidays that happen globally.

WE welcome ALL



"I joined Culture Club because I thought it would be a fun, new experience, and I thought I'd enjoy the atmosphere."
- Kylee Raygor

"I decided to join this club because I love learning about different cultures. I am also an exchange student, and have traveled from India to the United States to experience the life of the American community. I am really enjoying this club."
- Demanti Kumari

OUR way

"I would say our way in Culture Club is just having more diversity, and trying to create a community in our club by not just focusing on individuals, but coming together as a whole."
- Dinye Niruvakure

OUR *culture*

While Rocky has always valued diversity, the school now has a club dedicated to celebrating it. Mr. Mertel, one of the advisors of the Culture Club, said that the biggest challenge for the group was getting a new club off and running. Last year was the first year, and throughout this year, the group continued to grow.

Mertel stated he "hopes to create a space of inclusion at Rocky, where they are aware and appreciative of their own and others' cultures." The group will continue hosting Culture Fest each year, but they also want to do some smaller activities throughout the year to help themselves and others to be more aware and knowledgeable about various cultures at RIHS.

Mertel named Culture Fest as a definite highlight for the group. He said, "It was so rewarding seeing students display their talents and skills, while continuing their families' traditions and cultures."

The group had many new members this year, after losing several seniors last spring. However, the spirit of the club remained the same, and strong within its membership. Mertel stated, "I love being in a space with others who share my own passion for culture. We have a great time just talking to each other and sharing stories."

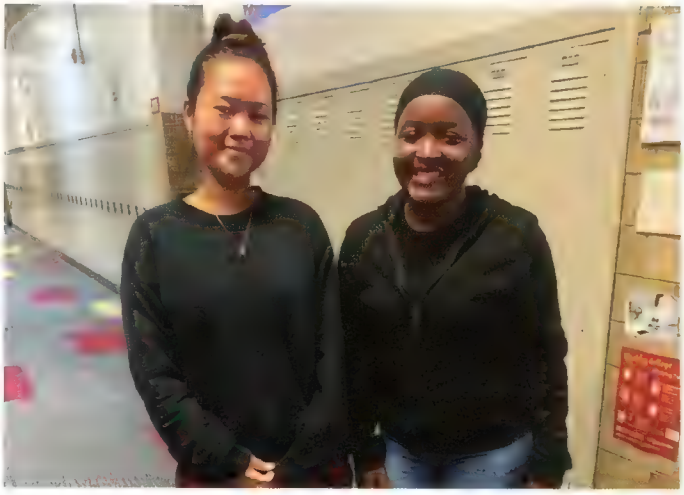
Culture Club is an important club to have at Rocky because it is a space to recognize and appreciate students' differences. "We have many clubs and organizations for people who share something in common. It's important to celebrate our uniqueness," Mertel explained.

OUR ADVISORS

"I hope this club provides a space for students and staff to be proud of their cultures, and to learn about others. I hope they gain a better understanding of themselves, and the world around them. Sometimes, learning about others' cultures can help us to understand our own, as well. I also hope that students are able to better connect with those different cultures, which they are able to carry into their lives beyond RIHS."
- Mr. Mertel

OUR *leaders*

"I decided to join Culture Club because it is a great environment to learn more about the diversity at Rocky. It also provides a safe space for me to share my own culture to other students. I was persuaded by a few of my friends last year, after hearing such positive reviews about the club.
This club is unique in its own ways. For starters, it is the most diverse club in the school. We have also hosted the Culture Fest, which was really successful last year. Additionally, we take time to educate our members about different languages, heritages, and traditions in our building.
I believe Culture Club is an important club to have at Rocky because it gives students a space to feel welcomed to embrace their cultures, and learn about others."
- Dinye Ntiruvakure



"I decided to join the Culture Club because it is a place where I can express myself, and connect with my heritage more. There is a large Asian population here at Rocky, and I want to help inform others about my culture, as well as learn more about other people's backgrounds.
This club offers students a safe place to share their experiences they face as a minority.
The Culture Club is important to have at Rocky because this is the only club where teens can take an active role to help educate their peers about the importance of culture."
- Lah Hser Paw

the future of EDUCATION

The goals of the Education Internship are to expose high school students to the teaching profession, as well as to build communication and leadership skills with their students and fellow interns. An additional goal is to expand the diversity of the teaching workforce in RIMSD. Students are also exposed to the college application process, and what education programs look like at that level. "We hope that this allows interns to understand this career path better, as well as to see themselves attending college," explained Mr. Mertel.

Students gain hands-on experience that can't be learned in a traditional classroom. Interns are able to work directly with passionate cooperating teachers and their students. They are provided with the opportunity for ownership, as well Interns are mostly taught communication skills, how to build relationships with their students, and how to ask questions to facilitate dialogue, and guide students to solve real world and academic problems. "The internship provides students with a real world lens of a career in education. When they report to their placements, they are doing so, not as students, but as an unofficial teacher in the room," Mr. Mertel stated.

As much fun as the Internship and experience is, time is the biggest challenge because interns report to their placements every day during their assigned class period. Full class discussions and meetings are held during 6th period. Students must learn to balance teaching, being a student, and any other extracurricular activities or work they have.

There are so many memories made each year in the Internship between the work students take on in their placements and their class discussions. However, Mr. Mertel explained that some of his favorite memories have to do with the group's college trips and school events that interns are involved in.

From the 2022-23 school year to the 2023-24 school year, the Education Internship has doubled, with now 41 interns spread out across the district. All interns are examples of leaders, which makes them good candidates for future educators. "Our group, this year especially, has stepped it up in their placements. Every cooperating teacher has expressed that their intern is truly an asset in their classroom in assisting students. We've been fortunate to have some strong returning interns, who have set the tone for the culture of the class," explained Mertel.

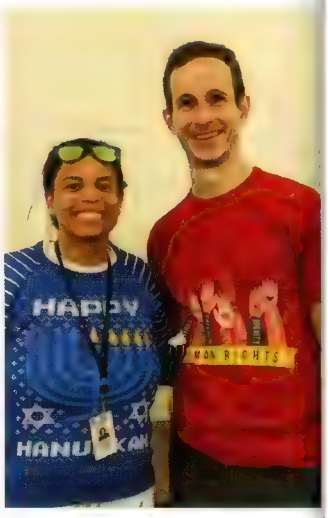
"My favorite part about the Education Internship is being able to build relationships with my kids. Seeing them every day, and having people who count on me is the best."
- Kamya McDuffy, 11

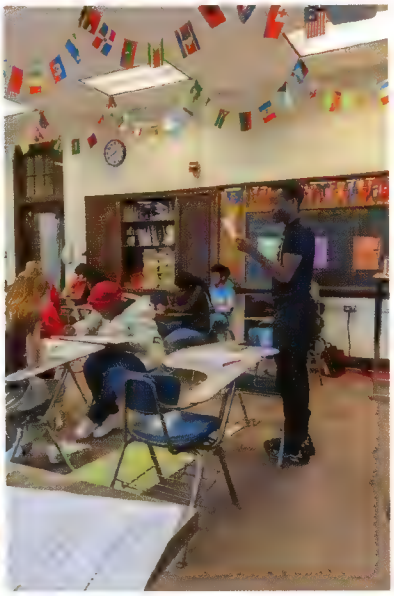
"My favorite part of the Internship is learning the kids' different personalities."
- Quincy Black, 11

"My favorite part of the Internship is getting the experience of teaching, and building relationships with students."
- Ella Mlekush, 12

"My favorite part of the course, as someone who is new to it this year, is interacting with the students. work with freshmen, and so it's fun to help students with units I did not do too long ago."
- Asa Mahn, 12

the MASTERMINDS behind it all





OUR way

"Our way for the Internship is teaching the youth leadership skills within education roles, whether that is as a classroom teacher, a social worker, a principal, an EL teacher, or more. We learn how to teach, and include all students, in our own way."
- Jade Gasper, 12

"I believe the Internship is beneficial for many reasons. The most obvious is that students at RIHS have an opportunity to learn about teaching, and gain hands-on experience to get an idea of what the career is like. The whole district, though, is impacted because there are over 40 classrooms from Pre-K to high school that have an additional support. The interns are able to provide more academic assistance, and serve as a role model for younger students."
- Mr. Mertel

"The Internship has drawn out a passion that I didn't even know I had. I always had an idea about teaching, but never about pursuing it. The Internship opened many doors and opportunities for me, too, that I appreciate."
- Delaney Carroll, 12

"The biggest impact the Internship has had on me is the relationships I've built in the last two years and kept. Mr. Mertel and Mrs. Parer do an amazing job at guiding and educating us on being a good educator."
- Ma'Liyah Taylor, 12

"Building relationships I never thought I needed was the biggest impact on me with the Internship."
- Conner Dilulio, 12

"An impact that this program has had on me is that it made me more outgoing, and it also taught me more about careers related to education."
- KayNiya Willoughby, 12

mental HEALTH matters

The Gray Matters is a mental health movement with one simple message, "You Matter!"

The Gray Matters started with an Augustana student, Hailey DeGreve, in 2018, when she created the group for a college project. She chose the name, "Gray Matters" because the gray part of mental health matters. She wanted people to become mental health advocates that would ultimately save lives. She started this chapter at the college, and then started going to local high schools.

The Gray Matters chapter here at Rocky talks about many different types of mental health. They talk about stress, and how to let go of hard things in your life, but they also talk about how "You Matter!" The group does fun activities, like painting rocks with inspirational messages on them, or writing things that stress students out on a balloon, and popping it.

The Gray Matters is a safe place for anyone to go there, and talk about their problems, or go there to advocate for mental health. The Gray Matters is open to anyone who wants to join, or just to come in and talk. "You matter, your mental health matters, and The Gray Matters," explains Mrs. Preston, a leader of the group.

Lean Kitterman is a new student leader for the Gray Matters this year. "It means a lot to me to be a student leader because I know it gives me more opportunity to help others. I want to help people by making them know that they're loved, and that they matter, and just trying to make a difference overall in the world of mental health."
- Leah Kitterman

"I joined the Gray Matters because I wanted to be a part of bringing awareness to mental health, and because I get to be with my friends while doing something that matters."
Eva Essman, 12

"I joined Gray Matters because I was struggling with my own mental health, and I needed someone to talk to, but also because I wanted to make a difference in the lives around me, and be an outlet for people who are struggling."
Chloe Turner, 12

OUR way

"We do it our way by trying to do things that include everyone. We always remain positive, and know that we are making a difference in what we do. We don't just create activities for one specific group. We create activities so that they're inclusive and fun for everyone."
- Alayna McKinley

"The reason I joined the Gray Matters is because I personally have struggled with mental health issues, and I know how hard it can be to suffer in silence. So, I joined the group to let people know it's okay to not be okay."
Tyler Spence, 12

LEARNING
the culture

French Club is a fun filled place, where any student can get exposure to the French culture. French Club, led by Madame B, welcomes anyone who wants to join. French Club is meant to be a place where students can make friends and feel safe and comfortable, while learning about French traditions and the language.

French Club has student leaders to help run and organize the club. Madame B explains, "Students are elected and chosen to be leaders (by fellow club members)."

Madame B loves to be involved with the French Club, in addition to her role as Rocky's French teacher. The group helps her connect with her students, and also gives her a chance to get to know them better. "We welcome anybody to join us for the fun, food, and the culture," Madame B explained. She has hopes that the club will get bigger, and give students the chance to connect with other students.

MARDI GRAS
at the Rock

"I loved the interaction of being able to make a French recipe. It was a great time, and the friends I saw and made were amazing."
- Alex Freitas

"I loved learning how to make crepes."
- Sage Ray

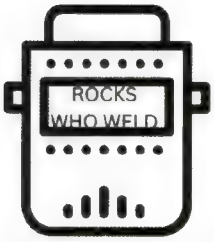
"I like getting to meet new people and getting to work with them, even though we messed up, but we had fun."
- Joslynn Henderson

OUR
way

"Our way for French Club means working together, having fun, and exchanging parts of the French culture with each other."
- Jayla Johnson

"Being a leader in French Club means a lot to me. I get to learn and share about the French culture at the same time. My favorite aspect of French Club is that it is open to anyone. You don't need to take French to join."
- Maryam Alhamdan

"I like being a leader in French Club because I get to meet other people who speak French, and I can improve my French, and also experience the culture with other people, as well as have fun."
- Sage Ray



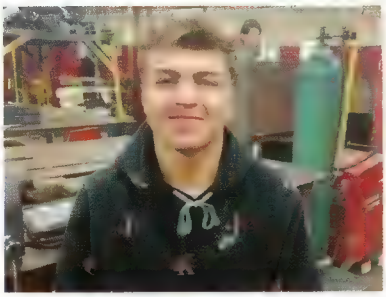
Most Welding students share the experience of feeling "accomplishment and pride," said Mr. Weber, Rocky's Welding teacher.

He explained, "The number one goal in the class is to learn how to be a skilled welder," but also learn the equipment and soft skills to be successful. This trade is, "Something that can't be taken away from them. The skill and knowledge that is not easy, but can help them for the rest of their lives," Mr. Weber explained.

One of the biggest challenges faced in the class is the amount of information that must be learned in the year. In the classroom, student leaders play a huge part in the ability to learn material. "This year, I have Riley Porter, who is in the apprenticeship, and has been my biggest leader. I also have Isaiah Samuelson and Tommy Honeycutt, who are in my advanced class, and have taken charge while in and outside the classroom," Weber stated. All students leave Rocky's Welding Program ready to take on a new career, and be successful there.

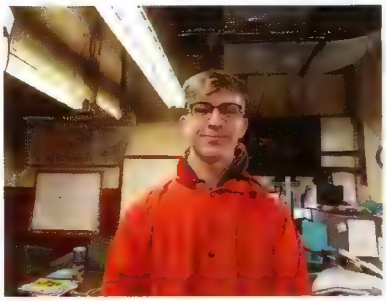
"I think our way with Welding is expressed in the way we personally learn, teach, and experience it. Along with the way it impacts our futures".
- Matthew Coon, 12

WELDING *as a rock*



"This program taught me several types of welding, about many different kinds of tools, different angles and positions of welding, as well as how to work with others, and what the experience would be like out in the real world."

- Isaiah Samuelson, 12



"I've learned in the Welding Program that communication and readiness is key. This is important to me, because this element is used everywhere, not just welding, and I can use it at any time".

- Jonathan Brown, 12

PEBBLES *and Welding Tips*

La'Mark Griffith decided to join Welding because he enjoys the hands on experience. He plans to take it again next year, explaining he was intrigued to the idea when he realized, "It's a good job, and it pays well." He explained that in his first year, he learned how to not just weld, but also how to run a generator.

Jake Osborn and Keyonte Farrow explained how much they enjoy this course, and that they plan to take it again. Together, they share a passion for everything they learned this year, including, "how to weld nice beads and strike an arc, and the difference between strike and t-welds, and other skills, like how to use power tools, grinders, and generators."

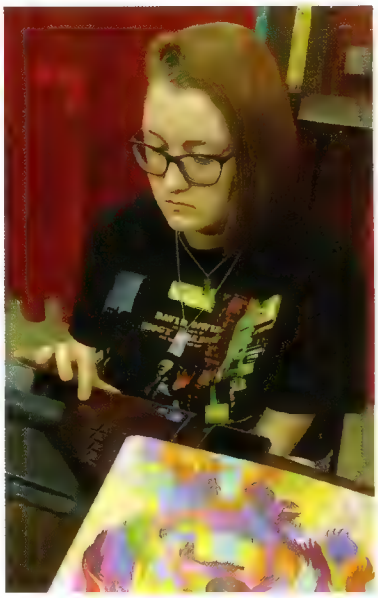
Kyle Thrap chose to join Welding and the apprenticeship because it "sounded cool," and it was needed for his job at Pool of Welding. During his time in class, he has learned the basics of welding, and the specifics in the different types. He also plans to take it again next year to continue growing in the trade.

WOMEN *in Welding*

Roxanne Hobert explains that, to her, the most important part of welding is learning the different techniques.

Although she is one of the only girls in class, Hobert chose to try welding because, "It feels like I'm going against what is 'normal' for women to do. But it also feels like since I'm a woman, not a lot of people actually want to work with me because they feel like I can't do what the boys can do," she explained.

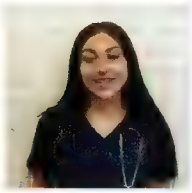
Another factor for Hobert was that her family was involved in welding. "My stepdad went to MTI for welding when I was a little girl. I was always fascinated with it, and I want to make a career out of it," she stated.



A TYPICAL DAY IN CNA

"Every week or two, we delve into a new chapter in our book, tackling topics like communication skills and personal hygiene. For each chapter, we complete tasks, such as creating notecards for vocabulary, working on our workbooks, and addressing notebook questions. Depending on the topic, we learn 1-2 practical skills, like brushing a resident's teeth or moving them from a bed to a wheelchair. We dedicate 1-2 days to mastering these skills through videos and hands-on practice with each other or on mannequins. Towards the chapter's end, we take a test covering the material, and demonstrate our skills. Class time is divided between working on assignments and practicing these essential caregiving skills."
- Maddie Carroll

Lah Set Moo
"My favorite aspect, so far, is probably doing skills on the mannequin and each other."

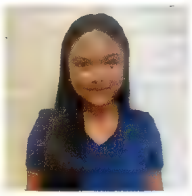


Kyleigha Mejia
"Knowing that I have something to look forward to after school is over. My favorite part is feeding, because I like talking with residents and keeping them company."

Layla Rice
"How much hands on time we get, and that our teacher is so open about any and everything. She always demonstrates, and it's a judgment free zone."

Lyric Rice
"The bond I form with the people in my class and my teacher/ instructor, also the feeling of just helping the residents."

Maddie Carroll
"Learning new skills, such as communication skills, hands on skills, and life lessons."



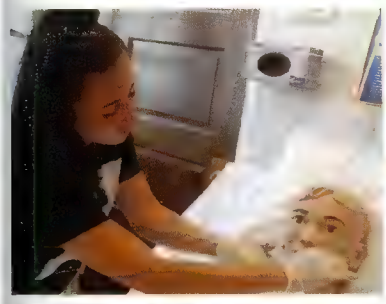
Man Nuam
"To go out and help the people in the nursing home."

Law Paw
"In the program, you get hands on training, which I like because I'm a visual and kinesthetic type of learner."

Jolena Lannen
"Going to Friendship Manor, and helping over there."

Mackenzie Farrance
"My favorite aspect is being able to learn, not only by textbook, but being able to visually learn and perform hands on skills."

CNA CLASS 23-24



THE *story* BEHIND THE SCRUBS *scrubs*

Rocky's CNA Program is one that helps students who want to go into the medical field build skills to use later on in their careers. This program creates opportunities to get a head start with their careers by being a CNA, and provides students with insight into what it might be like to work in the medical field. "The CNA Program offers the students knowledge, skills, and behaviors necessary to perform basic patient care, in a variety of health care settings," said Mrs. Lanning, the CNA teacher.

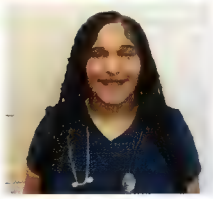
This program teaches students how to properly maintain patient hygiene and safety. Students learn to provide the proper physical support that a patient might need. The class does more than just offer high school credit, as it can open students up to potential career paths.

Being in the CNA Program is about more than just learning about the career, though. It can provide a rewarding feeling to be able to help and assist people. "Being a CNA provides a rewarding experience for those who want to help people, and make a difference in patients' daily lives, and I wanted to help students who were interested in entering this profession," Lanning stated. The program does have strict requirements for its students, however. "Students must be at a 2.5 GPA or higher. Their number of absences should be less than 10 deep in the current school year," said Lanning.

The class sets a high standard for students who will be the future of the community's medical field. They learn from hands on experience in clinicals, as well as in class training.

FINDING *our* FUTURE

"This program can help me get a jump start into my future, so I knew it would be a great opportunity."
- Grace Hathaway



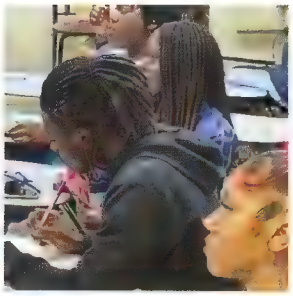
"The CNA Program is a step closer to what I want to do with my future."
- Cheyenne Rodriguez

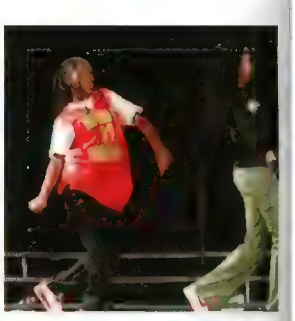
"Because I want to be a labor and delivery nurse, plus being in the program gets me there faster."
- Melanie Nebinger

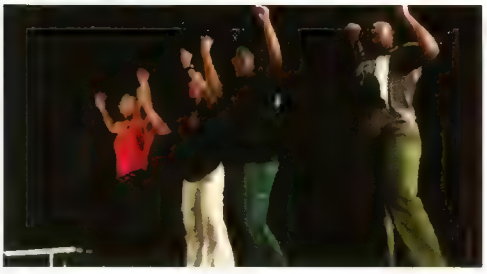
"Being able to help and assist people has been my main reason, as well as being able to graduate as a CNA from high school."
- Amalia Serrano

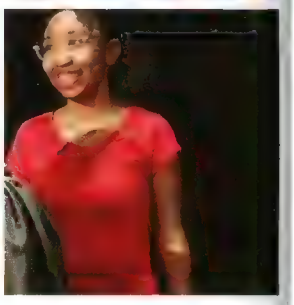
OUR → *way*

"Our way in CNA means how we embrace today shapes the destiny of our future tomorrow."
- Man Nuam, 12

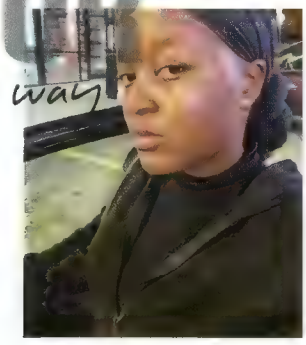








OUR way



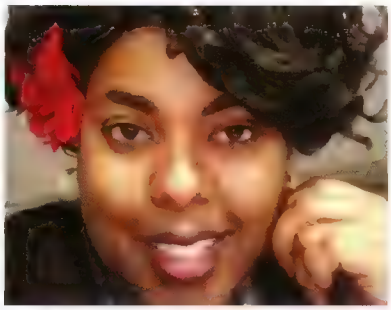
"I feel that OUR way for AAHC is to create a safe space for African American students to authentically be themselves with other students that look like them, as well as allowing students to learn new information about society and history that is relevant to African Americans."
- Ntiruvakure Dinye

OUR ADVISORS'

hopes for their students

"I hope students learn about the contributions African Americans have made in the development of America, and are inspired to become the best version of him or herself, and pursue his or her dreams. I want the students to learn that they have many reasons to be a proud member of our American society, a proud descendant of Africa, and that way they, too, can do great things for our country and the world."

- Dr. Yolanda Grandberry Pugh



"I hope the students gain a better understanding of their identity, and its relationship to the heritage and culture of African Americans. Students will learn to recognize their uniqueness, and continue sharing the heritage and culture with others, who may not have had the privilege in the r upbringing to learn about various heritages and cultures. Club members will remember the experience of being in a safe space, acknowledged, celebrated, and encouraged to be their very best, as they learn who they are, where they come from, and where they have yet to go."
- Dr. LaShanta Williams

African American Heritage Club Advisors discuss the challenges, goals, and memories of the group.

OUR HERITAGE

Rocky's African American Heritage Club provides opportunities for students to learn about the African American culture and achievements, as well as provides a safe space for students to discuss challenges and experiences unique to their ethnicity. Dr. Grandberry-Pugh explained, "AAHC's goal is to learn and explore the history and culture of Afr can Americans, as well as teach others about African American history and culture, and give our students the opportunity to learn about different HBCUs that they may be interested in attending."

While the club has lofty goals and high expectations for their members, the group has experienced some challenges this year, including participation and fundrais ng. "It seems like as soon as we get a nice group of kids coming to meetings regularly, and work ng to help the club be successful, a handful of them graduate This causes us to have to continuously recruit young people every year," Grandberry-Pugh explained. "The students who do participate in the club want to go places outside of the building, and we want to take them- like to visit colleges, including, HBCUs. However, the club struggles with doing fundraisers inside of the building because fundraising opportunities are limited."

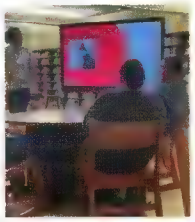
Despite facing challenges this year, Rocky's African American Heritage Club continued to provide a variety of educational opportunities, as well as a huge school wide performance of their Black History Month program. The program included a discussion of the history of the musical contributions of African Americans, featuring performances from Rocky students, alumni, and community members.

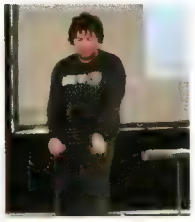
This club is important because it exists to help all students and the adults in the building. "The reality is, most Americans do not know, or only know of a few contributions made by African Americans that helped America become the country it is today. This does include the students and adults at Rocky. Also, some of our students may not see the value in learning about positive images of African Americans, their culture, and history. So, providing an opportunity for students to belong to a club, a club that says, 'You belong here, it is okay to be your authentic self, it is okay for you to embrace, share, and celebrate who you are and your culture; we understand you, we will help and support you, and we will encourage you,' that teaches them all of the wonderful things African Americans did to help build America," explained Grandberry-Pugh.

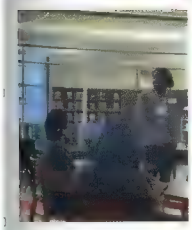
Lastly, the AAHC is important for those who are not African American, but want to learn about African American culture and history. "The doors of our club are open to all students in the building who are interested in what we discuss, teach, and do. The AAHC provides a safe environment for all to explore and learn. We welcome everyone, and strongly encourage those students and adults who want to learn about the history of African Americans and their culture to come join us. So, the AAHC is important because it is here to educate all, create a safe space to learn and grow for all, and to make all students feel a sense of belonging, and that they matter, and have value to Rock Island High School," stated Grandberry-Pugh.

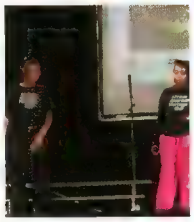
BLACK *history*

Every year during February, Black History Month, the AAHC hosts a Black History program, where members of the club come together to perform for the school. They also bring in Rocky graduates and community members to perform with them. This year, the group performed for a huge audience of sophomores, juniors, and seniors in the auditorium, while freshmen students watched via a live stream.





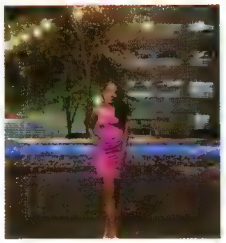




Every year, during Black History Month, the AAHC hosts activities for any student to join. This year, the AAHC hosted a few events for the students. These events included a film workshop, a poetry slam, a breakfast for African American Seniors who displayed Black Academic Excellence by earning a 3.0+ GPA, and a Black History program.

LEADERSHIP *starts here*

"As President, I am expected to ead club meetings, and arrange upcoming events, such as the Black History Program. AAHC is a safe space for African American students to express themselves with others that look like them. It also serves as an educational opportunity for students to learn more about the history and heritage of African Americans."
- Ntiruvakure Dinye, 12



"As one of the leaders, it's great that I can help others, while also strengthening my leadership skills. It gives other black and brown students a place to talk about anything go.ng on w thin our school and society. Once a year, we usually attend an HBCU. It's very important because it helps us expand our college options."
- Beline Shukuru, 11

"I feel it is an amazing position, and I see how other leaders in this position have felt with this opportunity. I am the treasurer, so I take care of the money, and make sure it is all counted right, and goes to the correct places. AAHC gives people the space to talk about what s going on around the world, and is a safe space."
- Keziah Anderson, 11

let's go, STUCO

This year has been full of changes for Student Council. Between the new faculty advisors, the many first year members, and changing some traditions to be more inclusive, the RIHS Student Council was ready to take on the year.

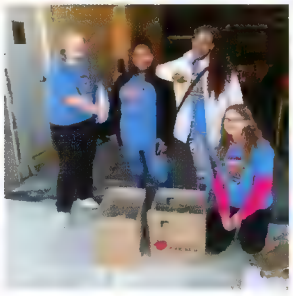
Mr. Tubbs is one of the new advisors to the group. He brought a new and very positive outlook on this year's potential of the students. He explained his desire to take the lead in the group, stating he liked "Knowing that I am helping Rocky carry on some of its rich traditions, and, hopefully, I am promoting more Rocky school spirit, as well."

One goal of the group is to help students feel welcomed and more involved within the school. Sophomore, Francesca Guyette was excited to join this year, stating, "I decided this year to join Student Council to help out the school, and especially people in need. Volunteering for things like the Hunger Drive and our Dance Marathon makes a difference, no matter how big or small."

The Student Council has remained busy this year with planning Homecoming, multiple Blood Drives, running the Student Hunger Drive, and Rocky's Dance Marathon. Through these service projects, they promote school spirit and Rocky pride.

ROCKS take the lead

The RIHS Student Council is under the new leadership of Mr. Tubbs, Miss Munday, Mr. Behnke, and Mrs. Jackson.



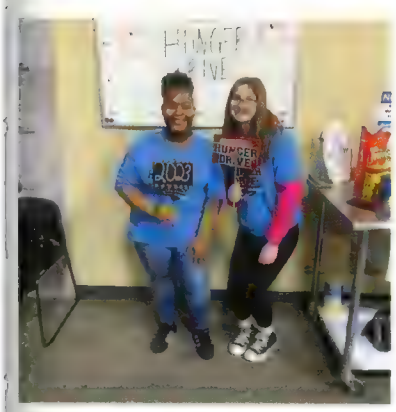
FIRST year

"The reason I joined StuCo was because I like being able to have a voice in something, and Student Council can help use my voice for the better. I also love volunteer work."
- Alexa Massie

"I joined Student Council because I enjoy helping people, and it's even more fun when I have friends with me to do so."
- Francesca Guyette

"I joined Student Council because I wanted to be more involved in school clubs, and I thought Student Council would be a great one to start with. It allows me to try new things, and make new friendships."
- Avery Hanson

"I wanted to be more involved with the school and community. I also wanted a way to be more social, and participate in the activities."
- Alaysha Veasey

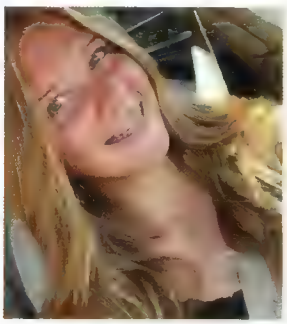


CREATING our memories

"My favorite part is raising money for Dance Marathon and helping lead events."
- Chloe Turner

"My purpose as a Junior President is to help get more involved helping my community, and try to get anyone involved, making sure we succeed as not only individuals, but as a whole group."
- Dylan Frantz

"My favorite part of my position is all the different connections and relationships I have made with a bunch of different people. One of my other favorite parts is helping out the community within the school."
- Isaac Perez



"My favorite part about being PR for Student Council is being able to express creativity through social media, as well as having that responsibility of making sure we keep people informed through all StuCo accounts."
- Jozie Kerr

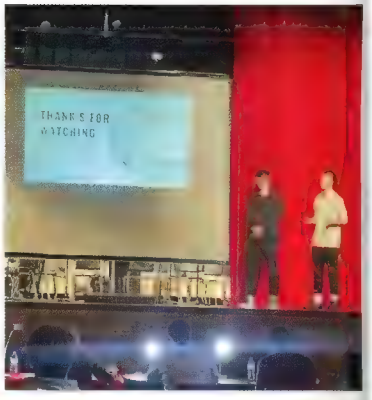
OUR → way

"Our way is working together to make the changes that everyone talks about wanting to see."
- Isaac Perez

not just BUSINESS AS USUAL

Students in Rocky's Entrepreneurship class get the opportunity to learn real world business skills in a high school setting. They focus on financial literacy, budgeting, and managing resources, while creating their own businesses. Mrs. Matson, the course instructor, explained that students develop valuable skills, like creativity, problem solving, and critical thinking.

Mrs. Matson explained that taking Entrepreneurship in high school can provide students with a solid foundation for future business endeavors, for those looking to enter into that field. "Students ideate, develop, and iterate a startup business throughout the year, culminating at a live pitch," she explained. Students in Incubator have a chance to share ideas when it comes to producing their own business ideas. Matson stated, "The businesses are real, not business cases or simulated experiences, meaning students experience mistakes, take risks, and learn to pivot based on market needs."



Students create teams to share their business ideas and strategies for starting their own company.

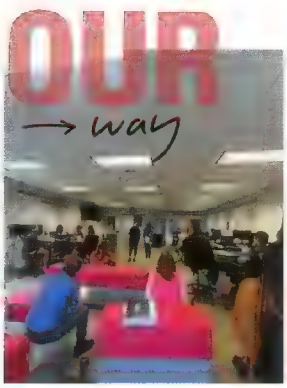
"The hands on experience enticed me to take the class." - Lucette Feigley

Students create business pitches to get investors. They practice their pitch and strategy in class to prepare for their actual pitch in the spring.

"Exploring the opportunities that are out there in the world of business." - Ja'Unique Morgan

Students present their own business ideas, and receive advice from their teacher and community members on how to better their businesses.

"I like how you actually have to create the business, rather than just get talked to on how to make one. I believe that this class has impacted my life because it sets me up better for my future, not just business, but talking to crowds, as well." - Asia Stern



"Our way is purposeful, learning, teamwork, collaboration, resilience, accountability, critical and creative thinking, and making meaningful connections." - Mrs. Matson

"I would like to have the group regain better numbers in terms of membership. I would also like to see the students take on more leadership roles. The more ownership the members have, the more powerful their actions."
- Mrs. Vens

"I would like to see the Riveters start to get our name out more by doing service projects and bringing in guest speakers."
- Ms. Churchill

SHOWING *our strength*

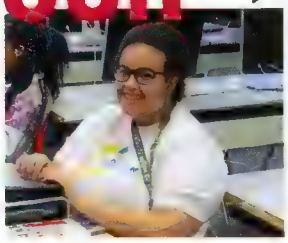
Mrs. Vens and Ms. Churchill, the advisors of the Rocky Riveters, always have welcome arms to any new member. "The club is a great opportunity for students looking to get involved in social issues, political issues, and service projects geared towards women's rights," Mrs. Vens stated.

The group continued to grow this year, as they took on new goals and worked towards this year's achievements. "My goal is to have our members really lead the charge with what we want to accomplish this year. It's great to see students being passionate about the Riveters and what we do, and I would love to see that expand even more to get even more members," Ms. Churchill explained.

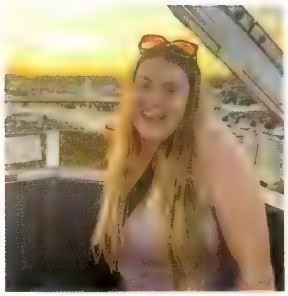
These ladies have been working hard throughout this semester, planning service projects and activities, including a book study. The Rocky Riveters are a strong family, and will make members feel welcomed and safe.

This year, the group decided to take on one project per quarter. During 2nd Quarter, they shopped for the Rocky Giving Tree. They also planned a voter registration drive and a Prom dress and accessory drive for the 4th Quarter.

OUR *way*



"I would say the Riveters' way of doing things is like a family trying to decide something. It is wonderfully chaotic, but we get stuff done."
- Christen Egan



Become a Riveter!

"The Rocky Riveters is a female empowerment club, and you get to learn different careers women do, and it's inspiring to hear about."
- Avery Hanson

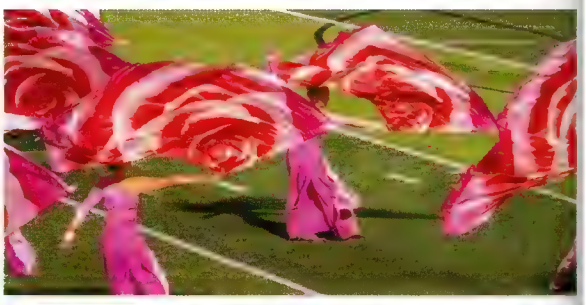
blooming TOGETHER

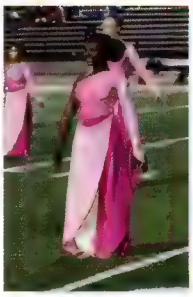
The Rock Island Marching Band's performance this year was "Bouquet", featuring songs such as "Golden Hour" by JVKE, "La Vie en Rose", and "Supermarket Flowers" by Ed Sheeran. This show's goal was to give the audience insight into how flowers communicate real-life emotion, and the changes one may go through. Director Pete Carlin described their performance as, "Emotions in life, from Love to Loss, and other life events." With this show, students were not only able to express themselves with music, but were able to express individuality throughout movements.

Expectations throughout the years have evolved, as Mr. Carlin explained, stating, "The whole activity has changed from just playing music and making forms, to creating full productions and storytelling on the field." Carlin was proud of all the different student leaders he had, from Drum Majors to Section Leaders. Everyone worked together. He expressed, "There are so many that do so much to lead the group and make a difference." Carlin also mentioned that in the end, "Everyone makes an impact, in one way or another."

The band overcame a number of challenges this year, including being unable to rehearse at the school for band camp, hot weather canceling practice, and even props and instruments breaking. Carlin noted that "Either they dealt with and overcame the issue, or the show wouldn't happen." However, Carlin hopes his students "learn how to work together as an ensemble, grow as musicians, and performers, but most of all, be quality people within their community."

*Photos by Josh Parr





"My favorite memory is getting matching blankets with some of my section, and then going to the City Museum in St. Louis."

- Abbi Parr

"My favorite memory from Marching Band was getting to yell at people to load the trailers."

- Lucette Feigley

"Making new friends, and playing in St. Louis for the first time."

- Alex Jackson

"It's definitely a big achievement, being able to be a part of something that is so important. It can be overwhelming, but once you get passed the learning aspect, and actually in a leadership position, you get used to it, and it ends up being worth it."
- Ash Campbell, 10

"Being a Drum Major is an honor because you get to watch the band's success, how hard they work, and be proud after every performance. It's one of my favorite things."

- Jaida Thompson, 11

THE PRIDE
of rock island

"The Alma Mater is a song the we sing after every performance to show that we proudly represent Rock Island High School."

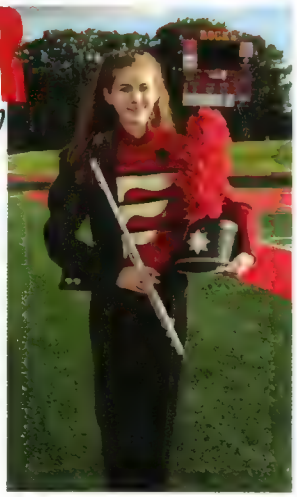
- Sydnee Moseley

"The tradition of walking with the Football Team down to the stadium is fun. It's us showing off the team and band looking good. The Drumline usually plays cadences as we walk down, and it gets everyone in the Friday Night Lights mood."

- Whitney Stivers

OUR → way

"Our way is perseverance, family, and efficiency. As well as always get the most out of every rehearsal, and making sure that you perform your very best every time. Marching Band is as much an individual sport as it is a team sport. Carlin says, 'You're only as good as your weakest link.' There is always an emphasis on making sure that you contribute, and do your part. It is one of the biggest factors in the success of the band."
- Kylie Melchi



"Senior Night is a moment of realization that 'I did it. I'm finished with this marching band.' But it's also a point to reflect on my last 4 years of marching band, with how I grew, and reminiscing on the beautiful experience."

- Lucette Feigley

marching on with our
TRADITIONS

"My favorite memory from this season is traveling to St. Louis, and performing in the dome, as well as hanging out with my friends on that trip."
- Cody Wolf

"Playing at St. Louis, and having my best show of the year. Also, hanging out with my friends at the hotel and at the City Museum was my favorite."

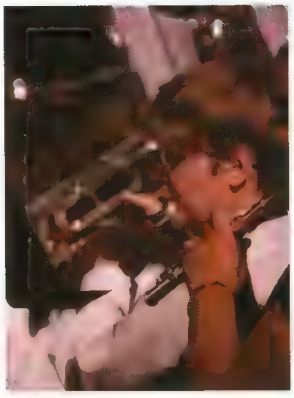
- Mark Jackson

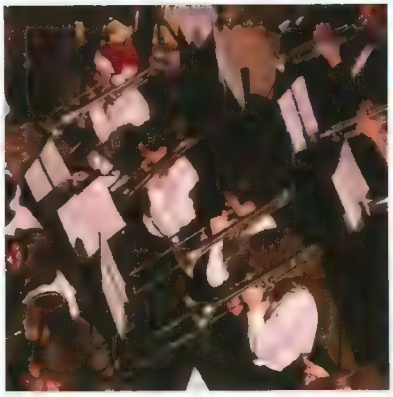
"My favorite memory from this year was making it to finals in Des Moines. I really enjoyed watching our band make it, and getting to perform twice that day."

- Maryam Alhamdan

OUR music

"Being a part of band is an incredible experience that isn't just about making music. It's about making connections and playing with pride."
- Karli Barker

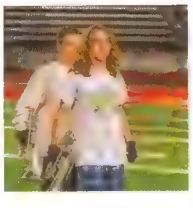




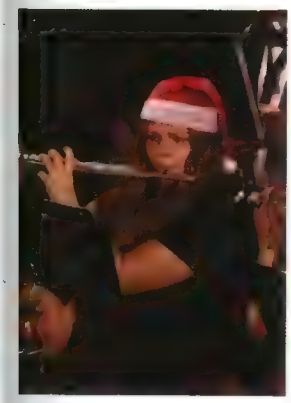
"To me, being a part of Rocky's Band Program means to never give up. Even if you find a rhythm hard to play, keep practicing, and ask for help. Always try your best! I made so many amazing memories and formed great friendships over the years!"
- Zaynah Hassan

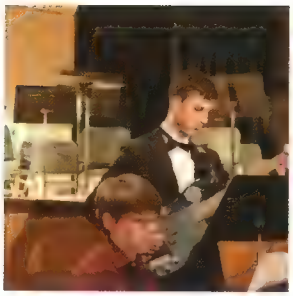
"Being a part of band has grown my passion and love for music. It helped me with some skills and confidence, and I've learned a lot from my upperclassmen about so many things. They are like my second family."
- Sonia Williams

"I think that being in Rocky's Band is an overall really positive experience. There are a lot of great and very talented people, and the teachers always push us to be the best we can be."
- Dylan Hartzler



CONCERT band





GETTING INTO THE
swing of jazz

"Jazz Band is an offshoot of Concert Band that covers different styles from Swing to Funk to Latin Jazz. It explores more different styles of music than the typical Concert or Symphonic Bands, with a smaller instrumentation. They perform at concerts and give back to their community by doing more performances."
- Mr. Carlin

ENDING THE YEAR
on the right note

While many people see Rocky's Band during the Marching Band season, those who truly know the program understand that band is a year-round commitment. Rocky's Band students are divided into three different groups, with each of them having a unique way of putting on performances for their audiences. The different bands include Concert Band, Symphonic Band, and Jazz Band. "Symphonic Band is the highest level in band, which is primarily made up of junior and senior students. Concert Band is made up of primarily freshmen and sophomore students, and teaches skills those students need to be able to make Symphonic Band. Jazz Band is an extension of those groups, and it explores various styles of Jazz music," Mr. Carlin said.

Band isn't just a class. It's a commitment. It can be challenging, but as Carlin explained, "The biggest challenges we face are just instrumentation and time to rehearse. So, we rewrite parts and focus on spots in music that are more difficult for students to figure out, when not in the classroom."

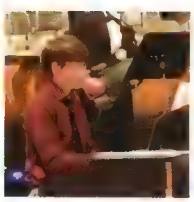
Being a part of the Band Program extends beyond just learning an instrument. Carlin explained, "I hope that I help them to realize how to problem solve, be good people, enjoy making music, and ultimately, become lifelong supporters of music in school."

HITTING THE RIGHT NOTE
with symphonic band

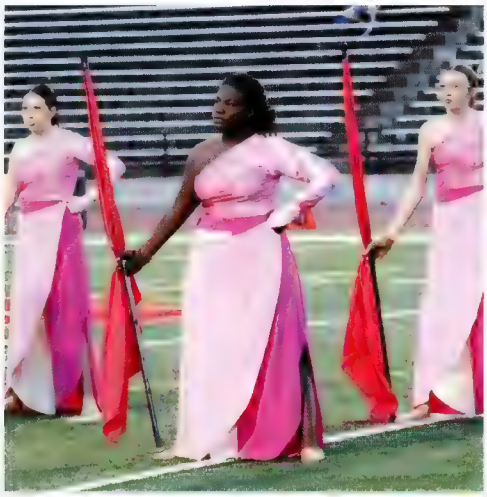
"I love getting to learn hard and challenging music, as not only does it help me get better at the instrument I play, but it also teaches me a lot about how music can work and function."
- Thom Elliott

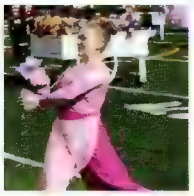
"I like Symphonic Band because it's a challenging experience, and it pushes me to become a better musician."
- Andrea Garcia-Gallegos

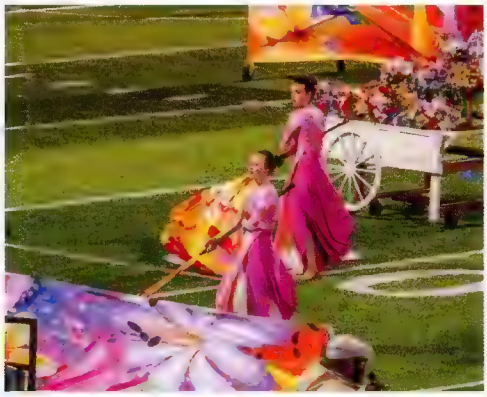
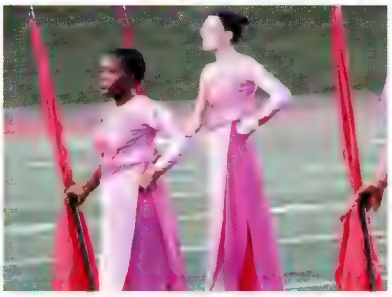
"I like the various pieces that we get to play. No two pieces are the same, and it widens my range as a musician, as well as the opportunities that come with it, like being able to try a new instrument."
- Kylie Melchi

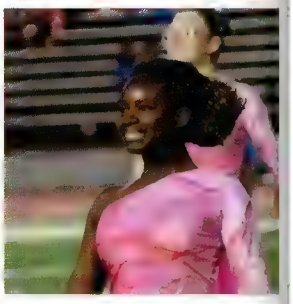


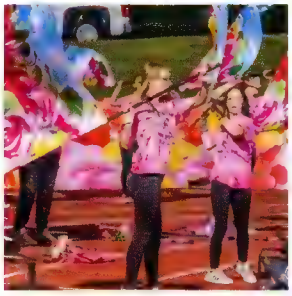
JAZZ BAND
2023-24

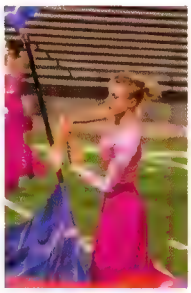










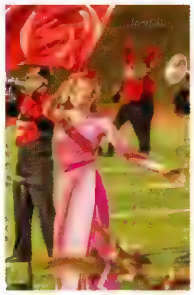
"My favorite part of our show this year was in the second movement, when we first pick up our flags, and start doing our flag work."
- Lauren Lambrecht

"My favorite thing about Color Guard is before every football game, we huddle up in a circle and chant, 'Rock Town'."
- EJ Mumma

COLOR GUARD 2023

OUR way

"Every time we would have a performance, whether that be a football game or an actual competition, our coach will come up to us individually, and give us a pep talk. Right after, she would touch our shoulder, and call us 'pretty' before we hit the field, so that we feel confident when performing our show. This is how Color Guard does it our way."
- Law Paw



"My favorite memory is when we got off the field at our last competition in St. Louis because it was the best show we had yet, and it was a great way to end our season."
- Audrey Long

"My favorite part of Bouquet is when the show first starts, I start with a big bouquet of flowers, and I dance around the flower cart."
- Jenna Kitterman

*Photos by Josh Par

"It's definitely a lot of work and a lot of writing and research. You need to make sure you have a lot of statistics, and the best way to win against opponents is having the most amount of lives impacted by your argument, if that makes sense. Normally, we have to wake up really early for Debate tournaments (4-6 AM), and they usually are 6-8 hours long."
- Millie Gidaszewski

"My experience in Debate has overall been positive. After many hours writing cases and working on rebuttals, we are finally taking home some medals and awards. It has taken a lot of work, but has definitely paid off. But my favorite part is probably the time we get to spend together as a group. It's a very fun group of people!"
- Olivia Seidlitz

"My favorite experience is probably winning first at a competition."
- Haleigh Laud

"Speech and Debate has really helped me with my anxiety disorder surrounding other people, considering how much speaking and reading I have to do. It's also helped me with my English essays, considering the writing we do in our cases. I've built team skills, as well, because we work in groups of two. I genuinely do not think I would have met the amazing people I have, or built up the necessary skills I have now if it weren't for Debate."
- Sage Ray

"My experience with Debate was that I had to put in a good amount of work to prepare my stuff, but it was very rewarding once I got used to it in tournaments, and also it improved my speaking. So, in conclusion, I had a great experience with Debate this year."
- Jackson St Amand

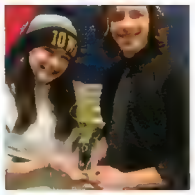
What is your experience as a Debate Student?

As the Debate Team strategized their way through competitions, they always had a very clear and competitive mindset when representing the Rock with their arguments. "The mindset helps me be able to stay organized and put together, and make sure I get things accomplished," stated Millie Gidaszewski.

The students aren't the only ones with this mindset. Mr. Duster, the Debate Coach, always encouraged his students to try their best with the competitions. His mindset made the team come together and work as a family. "We use the mindset to work as a team, and do well individually for the competitions," stated Mr. Duster.

The team had a number of accomplishments throughout the season. "We have improved upon our record every tournament. At our most recent tournament, we took home three trophies and four medals," Duster said.

As the team wrapped up their season, they always knew how to celebrate with one another. They worked as a team, and made sure their voices were heard. "I am proud to coach such a great group of students!" Mr Duster said.



"I would define 'our way' for Debate as having to manage your time. You have to write a Pro case and a Con case, and do a lot of research, and understand the topic of the month. On top of understanding the topics, you also need to know how to speak well, and get your point across."
- Millie Gidaszewski

Goals for the Team

"Our goals are to be competitive, and grow individually, and to improve as a team."
- Mr. Duster

OUR culture

"This year's group is larger than previous years, and each member is unique in their own special way. The members are proud, talented, as well as motivated, and the majority of the group has goals that they have set for themselves, and have put forth the effort to achieve them both in and out of school."
- Ms. Ramirez

there's always LASO a purpose.

The purpose of LASO is for Latin American students to feel heard and represented. LASO is for all students to join and learn about Latin culture, and the different aspects in the Latin community. Joshua Galeana, a club member, said, "I think what makes LASO different from other clubs at Rocky is how anyone is welcomed who wants to learn about Latin culture. Also, with it having to do with just Latin culture, there would be music, dance, food, language, art, history and many more things, which gives a vibrant and positive vibe to the club."

CELEBRATING our culture

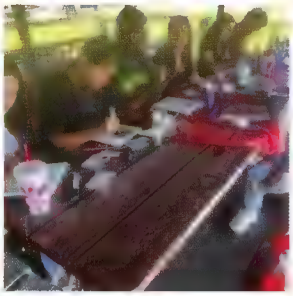
LASO (Latin American Student Organization) is a unique club at Rocky that focuses on developing an understanding and appreciation for the Latin culture amongst Rocky students.

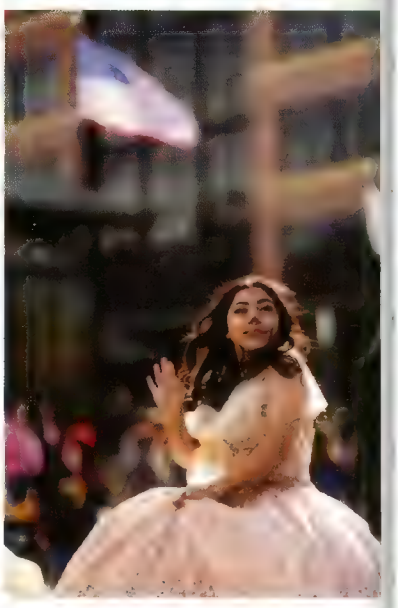
This club has grown so much over the years, only improving more and more. Ms. Ramirez, the advisor of the club, stated, "LASO has more members than the past years, and students are beginning to feel a sense of belonging."

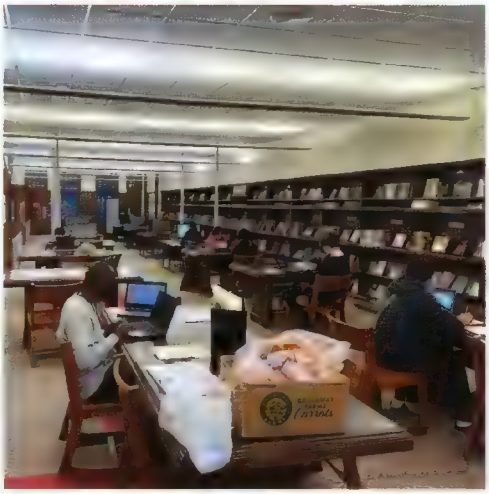
Every club here at Rocky has a goal. The goal for LASO is to increase the interest and awareness of the club and its purpose- to spread knowledge about the Latin American culture, and make it known that their voices are being heard!

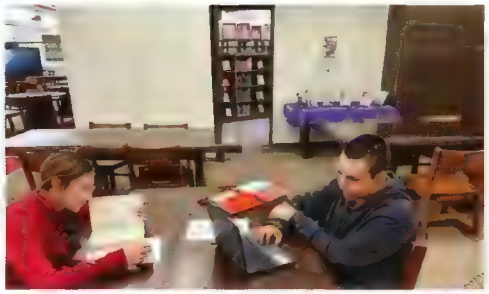
"I have always had a strong connection to my Latin heritage, and have always talked about my Latin roots. I wanted to help others, who don't know much about Latin culture learn about it!"
- Joshua Galeana

"I wanted to be a part of LASO to increase my Spanish skills. I love learning about different Latin American countries that my club members share!"
- Carla Nieto









OUR → grades

"9th Hour Study Club has helped me improve my grades a lot, and helped me recover some of my credits. Since it's free time, I use it to work on missing assignments, and on Edmentum."
- Lineth Valverde

9th HOUR *study club*

Students spend their time after school catching up on work and asking for help.

The 9th Hour Study Club is an after school program, where students can go and work on homework or missing work, with the help of teachers. This helps students keep up their grades, and keep their credits on track to graduate. Along with the extra help, they are able to wipe out their detention time.

Mr. Mwaga has been working at Rocky for two years. He is the teacher leader for the 9th Hour Study Club. As well as leading the program, he is also an EL Social Studies teacher, and Co-Sponsor of the Culture Club.

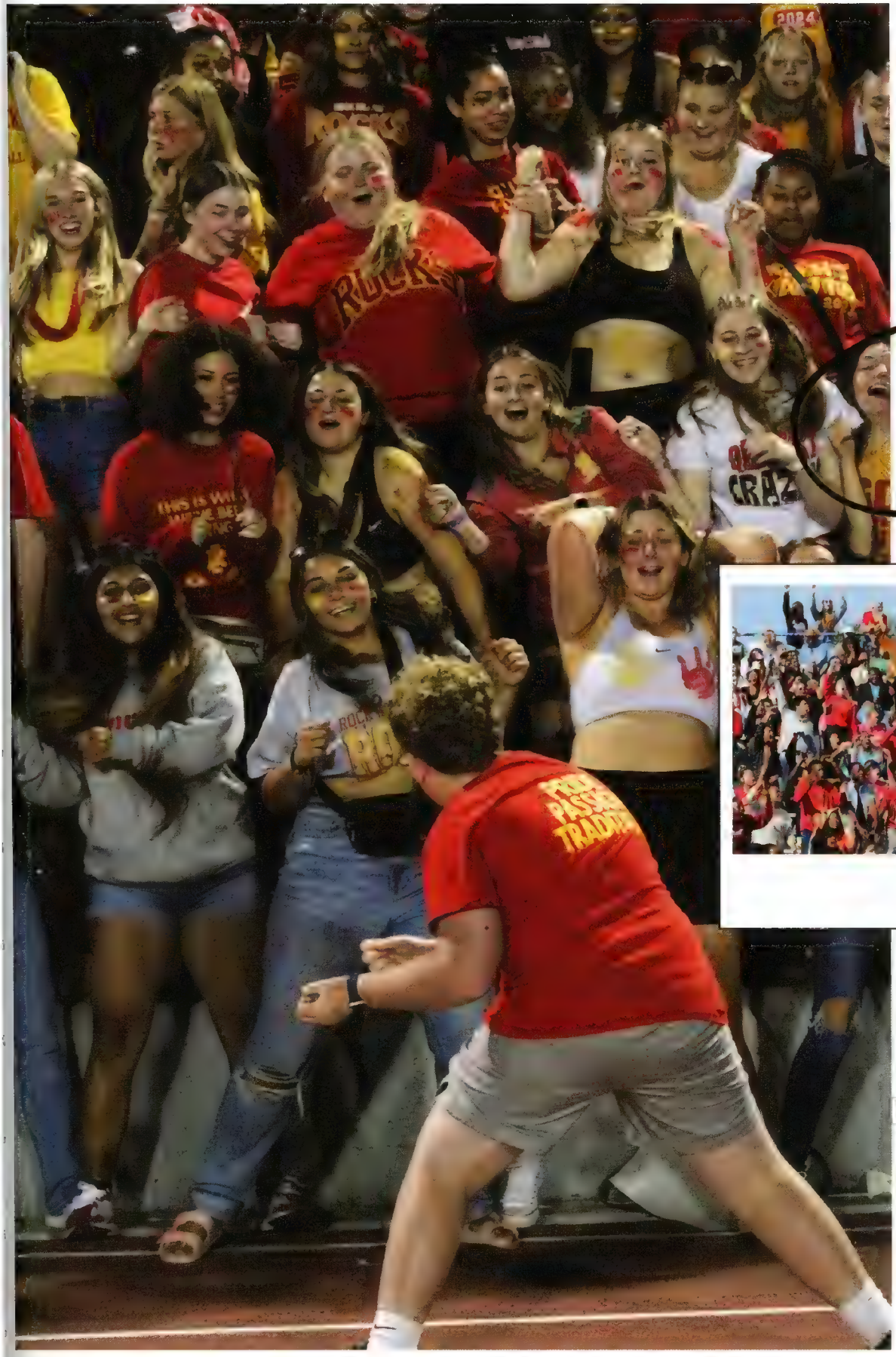
All students are able to go after school, and get help from teachers. Many students come and take the opportunity to catch up on their school work. Mr. Mwaga and Mrs. Andedo hope more of the students take advantage of this free service!

"Being involved at Rocky has helped me to meet new people, and experience things I wouldn't have experienced otherwise."
- Kampbell Allen

our LIFE

"Being involved with sports helped me gain friendships from all grades."
- Evan Ellis

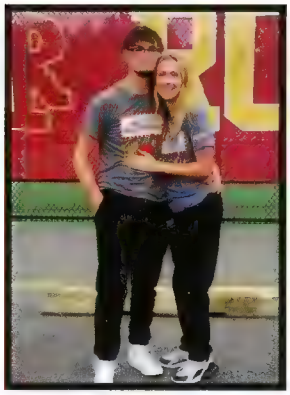
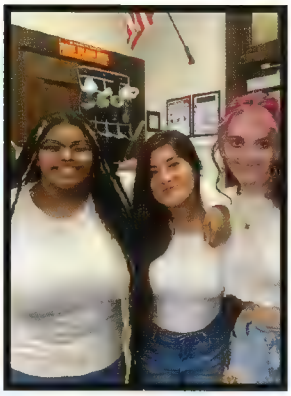
"The more involved I became at Rocky, the more fun I began to have."
- Alex Romo

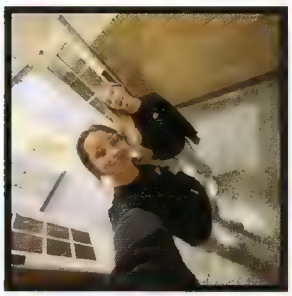


Our life at Rocky is best defined by the experiences in our student section, where students of all backgrounds mesh together to cheer on our teams. This show of diversity embodies what Rocky life is all about.

STUDENT LIFE @ THE ROCK

TWIN DAY

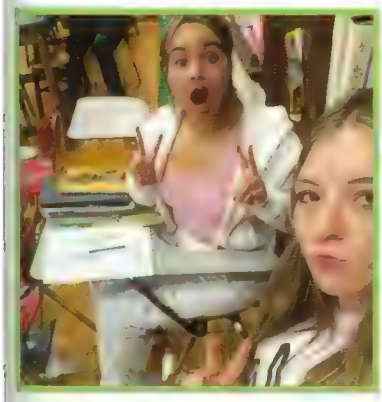





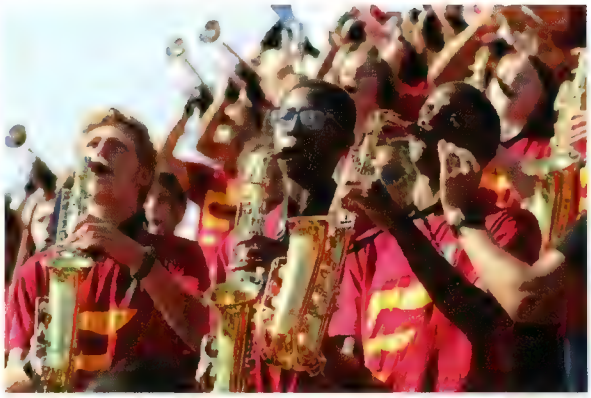
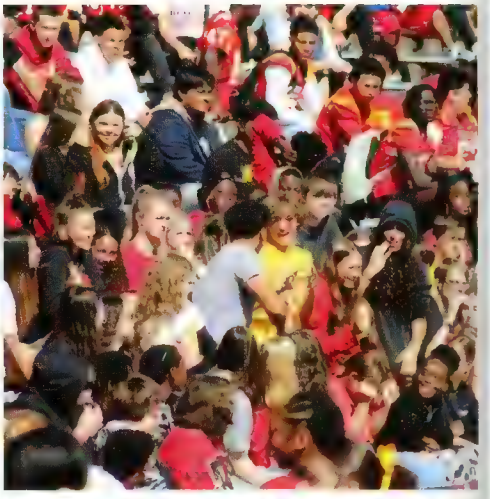
HOCO week

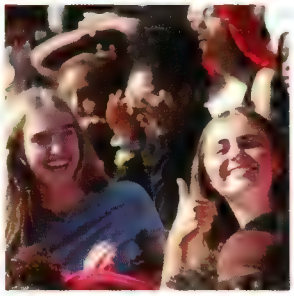
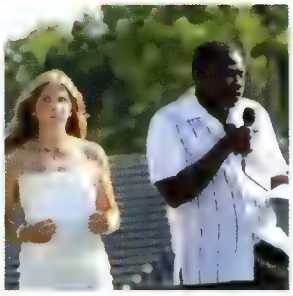
WESTERN DAY

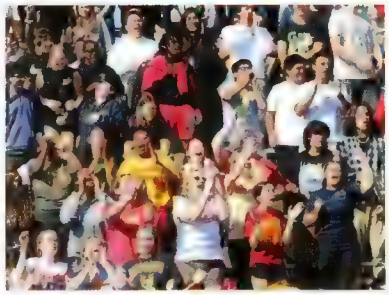
CLASS COLOR DAY

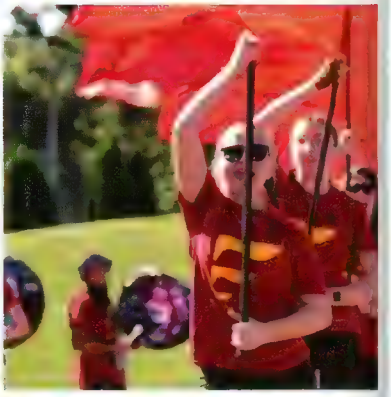


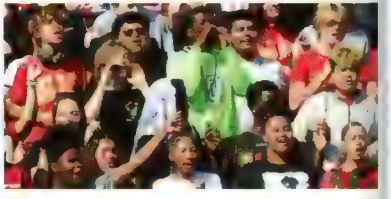
RED & GOLD DAY

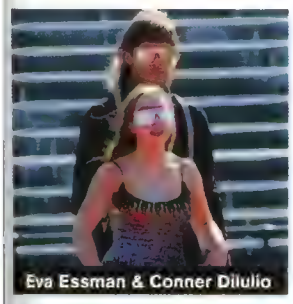



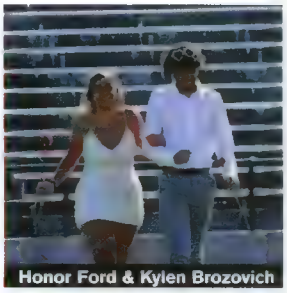

HOCO
pep rally

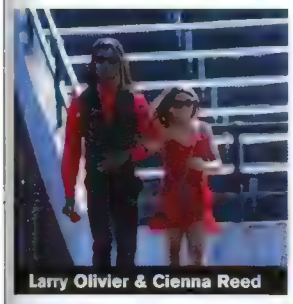


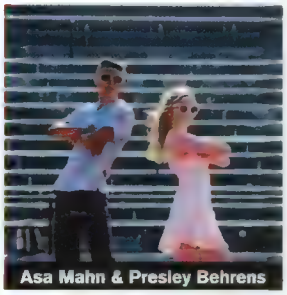


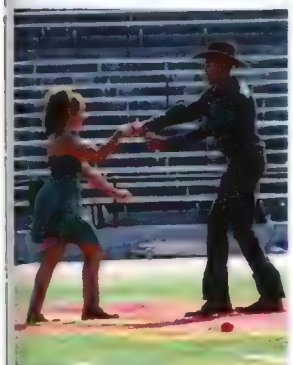
HOMECOMING

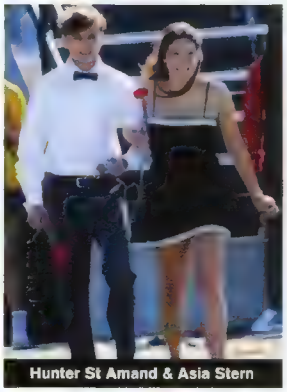

Eva Essman & Conner Dilulio


Honor Ford & Kylen Brozovich


Larry Olivier & Cienna Reed

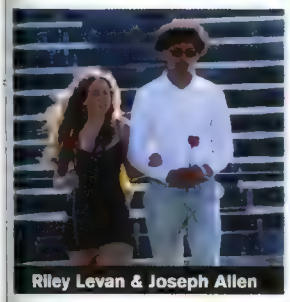

Asa Mahn & Presley Behrens


Mina Boyer & Angelo Gay

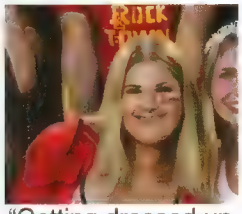

Hunter St Amand & Asia Stern

John Wilde & Norah Wright

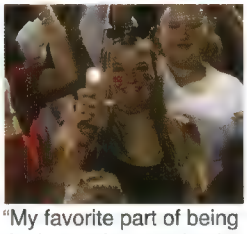
Dalanna Biswell & Avery Flactiff


Riley Levan & Joseph Allen

Dezmund Jackson & Addison Bomelyn



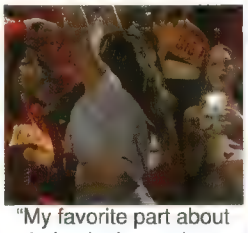
"Getting dressed up for the themes with friends."
- Alaina Esposito, 12



"My favorite part of being in the student section is participating in the themes, and cheering with my friends."
- Lexie Walker, 12

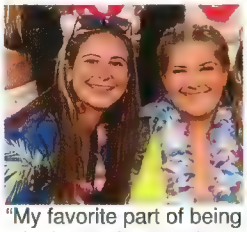
FANS IN *fans in*

"My favorite part of being in the student section is getting to dress up in super fun, themed outfits, as well as participating in the RockTown cheer."
- Jozie Kerr, 11



"My favorite part about being in the student section is the themes and supporting the teams."
- Honor Ford, 12

"Supporting the team, and overall, supporting the school. Having school spirit, dressing up for themes, and standing, yelling chants is the best feeling ever! It's such a fun time, a good way to meet new people, and it really boosts the players' confidence, while playing."
- Morris Nunn, 11



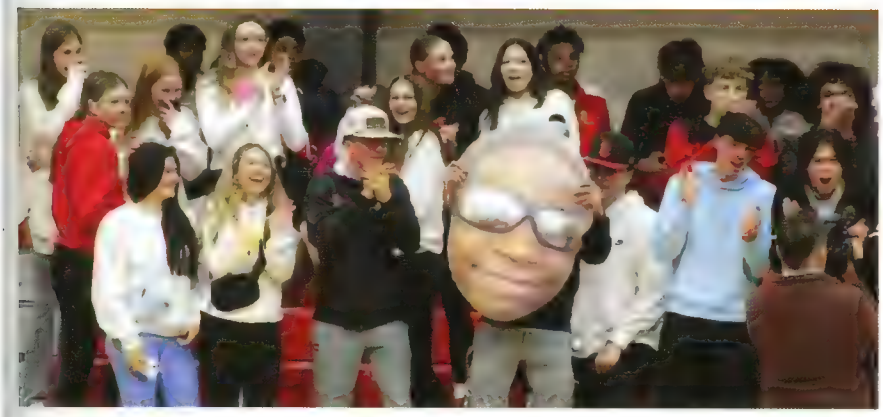
"My favorite part of being in the student section would be the chants, and how hyped we all get after our team gets a touchdown or a point."
- Autumn Stone, 12

THE STANDS

the stands

"I enjoy being able to support my classmates, while hanging out with my friends."
- Conner Dilulio, 12

"Supporting the team and getting loud when a good play happens."
- Owen Michaels, 12



"Dressing up for the themes, and going to the games with my friends."
- Addison Bomelyn, 12

"Just being involved in the school spirit and supporting the teams."
- Aidan Brokaw, 12

"It's always a good time to cheer on the team."
- Kaydon Krup, 12

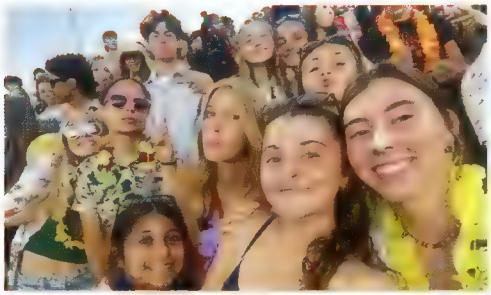
"Being with my best friends in the front row, cheering on Rocky Nation!"
- Junior Dominguez, 12

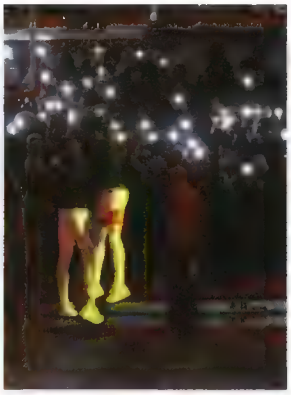
CHEERING IN STYLE

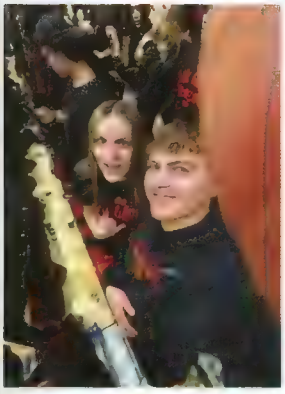
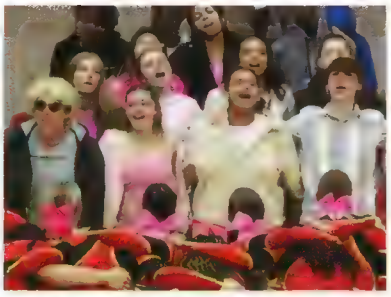
cheering in style

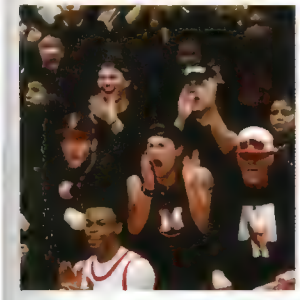
RIHS GAME DAY THEMES 2023:

- Minooka
  8/25 - Neon
- Dunlap
  9/1 - Frat
- Quincy
  9/8 - Beach
- Newman Catholic
  9/15 - Red & Gold
- Moline
  9/22 - Black Out
- United Township
  9/29 - Pajamas
- Galesburg
  10/6 - White Lie
- Sterling
  10/13 - Halloween
- Geneseo
  10/20 - Pink Out





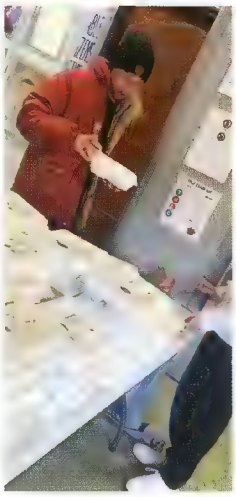





- [x] **VS Galesburg**
  12/1 - Barbie and Ken
- [x] **@ Peoria Notre Dame**
  12/2 - Tie Dye
- [x] **@ Sterling**
  12/5 - Bright Future
- [x] **@ Moline**
  12/8 - Black Out
- [x] **VS Geneseo**
  12/16 - Christmas
- [x] **@ Normal Community**
  12/19 - White Out
- [x] **VS Peoria High**
  1/2 - Pajama
- [x] **@ UT**
  1/5 - Camo
- [x] **VS Alleman**
  1/9 - Superhero
- [x] **VS Quincy**
  1/12 - Jersey
- [x] **@ Galesburg**
  1/19 - Twin
- [x] **VS Lincoln**
  1/20 - School Spirit
- [x] **VS Sterling**
  1/23 - USA
- [x] **VS Moline**
  1/26 - Blackout
- [x] **@ Geneseo**
  2/2 - Country/Western
- [x] **@ Rockridge**
  2/3 - Rhyme Without a Reason
- [x] **VS UT**
  2/6 - Senior Citizen
- [x] **@ Alleman**
  2/9 - Frat
- [x] **@ East Peoria**
  2/10 - Color Explosion
- [x] **@ Quincy**
  2/13 - Beach

Thurgood Marshall Learning Center

TMLC '23-'24



TMLC TITANS '23-'24

"The relationship the staff has with students is a positive aspect of TMLC that gets overlooked. It is a school that has staff that truly cares about the students being successful in and outside of the classroom."
- Ms. Johnna

TMLC TITANS '23-'24

Students at TMLC speak about teachers who have made a difference on their experiences at school.

"Ms. Destiny does everything for us. She cares and actually listens to what we have to say."

"Mr. Smith and Mr. VanDeWalle are nice and help make sure my work gets done."

"My biggest impact here came from Ms. Bell and Mrs. Harris."

"Mr. Josh makes sure everything goes right for us all the time."

- TMLC Students

POWDERPUFF powderpuff 2023

There is no way to lose in Powderpuff. The score is just a number because it's the money raised and cans collected that matter.

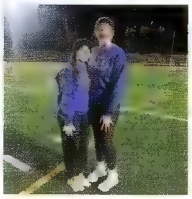
When it comes to Powderpuff, the school allows the girls in the Senior and Junior classes to participate in an all girls flag football game. The objective of the game is to raise money for the Student Hunger Drive in a fun way.

This year's game was successful on a number of fronts- the cans and donations collected, the athleticism, and the sportsmanship between the teams.

Senior Cheyeane Stanley explained, "As a student, I would recommend joining in on playing Powderpuff. Not only is it a chance to help support the community through donating towards the event, but it also is an amazing opportunity to know your fellow classmates better. Although there are very few practices, it allows you to create new and better relationships with your peers, and it teaches you how to work as a team."

"My favorite part of Powderpuff was the feeling of beating the Seniors. Just being able to experience it, really."
- Abbagale Lieber, 11

"My favorite part of Powderpuff was designing the sweatshirts, and seeing everyone wearing them."
- Jozie Kerr, 11

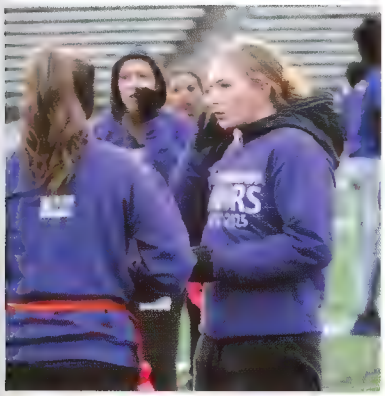


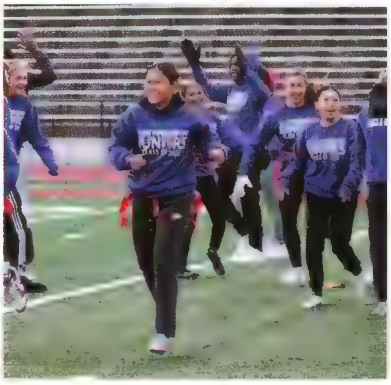
"My favorite part of Powderpuff was celebrating with the team after winning against the Seniors because they were talking smack the whole time."
- Madison Carroll, 11

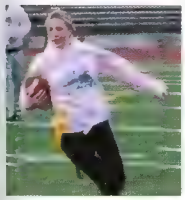
"My favorite part of Powderpuff was the celebrations when my teammates did good It was cheering on the team when I wasn't playing."
- Layla Rice, 11

"My favorite part of Powderpuff was celebrating with the team after getting a pick 6."
- Olivia Samuelson, 11

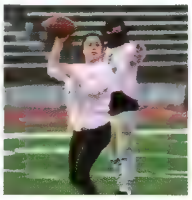
SENIORS vs. JUNIORS







"My favorite part of Powderpuff was celebrating after scoring touchdowns.'
- Addison Bomelyn, 12

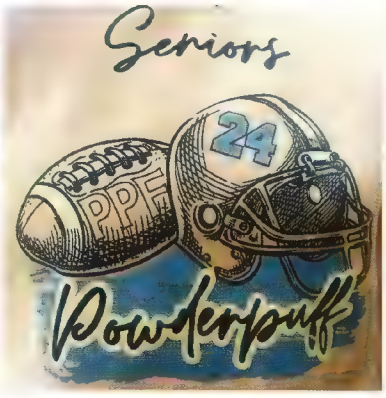


"My favorite part of Powderpuff was being QB 1, but the practices with all my friends was my favorite part of preparing for the game."
- Amanda Mumma, 12

"My favorite part of Powderpuff was playing with my friends, and cheering the team on, as the game was in play."
- Honor Ford, 12

"My touchdown was my favorite part. Everyone was so hyped and excited."
- Giselle Aceviz, 12

"My favorite parts of Powderpuff were getting to celebrate with my team when we ran a good play, but also, just getting to know the girls in my class a little better."
- Cheyeane Stanley, 12



BeReal

2023
2024

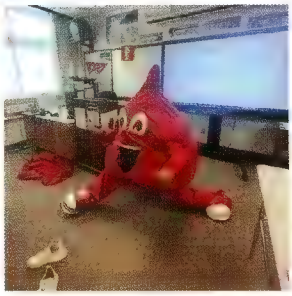
Girl Dinner

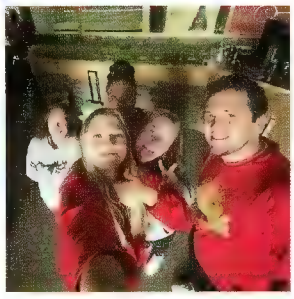
"Chicken nuggets, yogurt, and Cheeto's is so good."
- Lizzie Shorten

"I live off of Lunchables and Bubbl'r."
- Avery Hanson

"Cheez-it and Atomic. You can't go wrong with those."
- Ashlynn Simmons

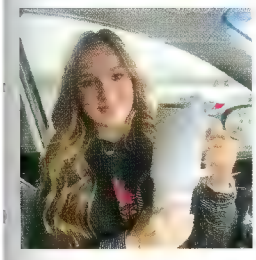
"Hot Cheetos crushed with pickles and a side of grapes."
- Khloe Fluegel





2023-2024 Digital Trends

Best Trends of 2023



"My favorite trend of 2023 has been the Stanley's. They are just so cute and aesthetic."
- Isabella Adner

"My favorite trend of 2023 would be Uggs coming back in style."
- Zoe Fuller

"I enjoyed the Clean Girl Trend because it tied back to my personal style this year."
- Cienna Reed

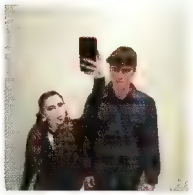
"I use it because it's very moisturizing, and it works really well. I like that it does the job, and can be used for lashes and stuff, too."
- Allegrah Sutter

"I prefer Aquaphor over Chap-Stick because it lasts longer for me throughout the day, more so than Chap-Stick, and it doesn't fade quickly."
- Leah Kitterman

FAMILIES at the ROCK

TWINS

"Going to school with my twin is awesome. It s like having a built in best friend, no matter where you are, or what you're doing. One of us always knows what's going on, and relays it to the other. I love going to school with my twin!"
- Jade Gasper



Jade & Gavin Gasper

"It's nice going to schoo with my twin. I like going to school with him because we get to help each other with d fferent homework and activ ties. It's also nice having someone you can talk to about your problems at school."
- Isaac Perez

Isaac & Jacob Perez

"Going to school with my twin is definitely a blast. It's a lot of fun to know that you have someone you've known your whole life n the same school as you. Twins are literally built in best friends."
- Elaina Biswell

Elaina & Eric Biswell

"It feels, honestly, most likely the same thing as going to school with another sibling. It doesn't affect me any way, really."
- Mark Jackson

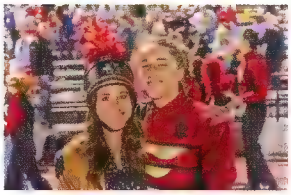
Mark & Alex Jackson

"It gets difficult when everyone thinks I'm her, but with us being in the same grade, we can help each other with schoolwork, if we don't understand."
- Alexa Massie

Alexa & Aubrey Massie

STAFF

Mrs. Wendland & Mrs. Jackson



The Hartzlers

The Vromans

The Gustufsons

The Kittermans

The Stockwells

The Dieudonnés

SIBLINGS

"Going to school with Lauryn is fun. We get to talk about things other people might not know about, and we get to support each other in anything we do.'
- Karli Barker

Karli & Lauryn Barker

"It's just a weird experience, going to school with Hudson. He's three years younger than me, so I've always seen him as a little kid. So, having him grow up, and come to school with me feels crazy."
- Presley Behrens

Presley & Hudson Behrens

"I love going to school w th my brother. I always have someone to joke around and mess with during the day. We always talk to each other when we see each other in the hallways, and I always have someone to do homework with at home."
- Delaney Carroll

Delaney & Gunnar Carroll

"Going to school with my sibling is pretty cool! I love to go to Atomic after school with her!"
- Kal Boswell

Kal & Vanessa Boswell

"Having my brothers with me at school makes me feel comforted, and it's very crazy we all have different schedules, very early in the morning, but I know that if I needed something, they'd leave class to help me."
- Dylan Frantz

Dylan, Aiden, & Kasee Frantz

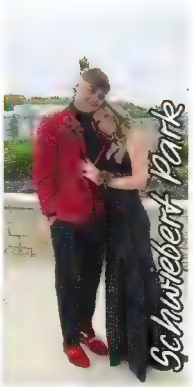
QC FAVS qc faves

BEST photo OP

Black Hawk

Vander Veer

Duck Creek Park


Schwiebert Park

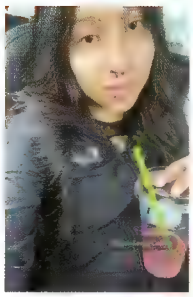
John Deere Pavilion

TPC Deere Run

QC Botanical Center

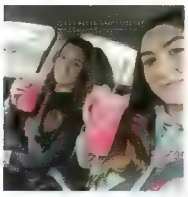
Vibrant Arena

POP OF energy


Kick Serve

Atomic

Coffee Hound



Wholly Grinds

POST GAME hangouts

Buffalo Wild Wings

Igor's

Lifted Energy

Icy Bubbles

Steak 'n Shake

Starbucks

Raising Canes

Wing Stop

23-24 THE TRENDS

What would our school year be without trends controlling our tastes and interests? This year has been a year of comebacks! '90s inspired clothing is back, making our parents say, "I wore something just like that when I was younger!" Our trends are new to us, but not to older generations. It seems like no matter where you look, Ugg Minis are sold out. Of course, you can never go wrong with some Nike Air Forces or Dunks to complete your look. No matter if you follow the trends or not, you can't help but marvel at their influence!

ARE YOU A TREND FOLLOWER?

BRING ON THE BLING

"I wear these bracelets because I'm a big advocate for mental health, and being able to look down and have those reminders is always reassuring."
- Abigail Dillard

"The piece that means the most to me has to be my 'firefly' necklace that is custom made with my grandma's handwriting. Fireflies were her favorite thing, so it means a lot to have a part of her always with me."
- Vanessa Boswell

"A lot of people in my family also wear an Italian charm bracelet, like my grandma and cousins. It's special because you can add a charm every time you want to signify an important moment."
- Reagan Hawotte

"The ring on the right was given to me by my great Aunt Margo, and the one on the left was given to me by my Grandma Alice. Both are really special to me because they hold family value."
- Riley Levan

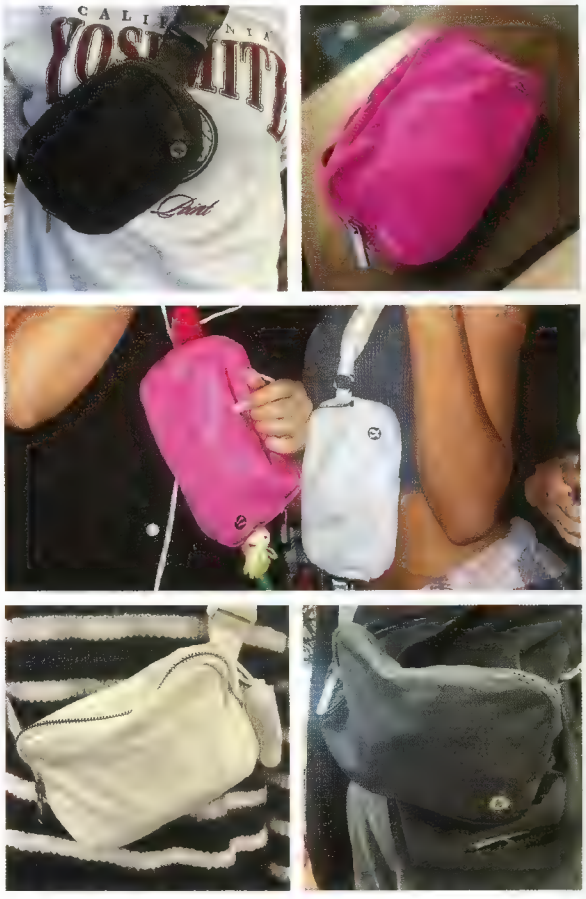
UGG

not again...

As these sheepskin boots make their way back into fashion, students show off their favorite ways of styling this new and improved throwback.

NIKE NECESSITIES

BELT BAGS



TRADITIONS

traditions

ROCKY

The cheerleaders put on a performance every year for the Homecoming Pep Rally for the whole school.

Girls sports didn't always exist here at Rocky. Sports for girls are relatively new. Girl sports used to be called the G.A.A. (the Girls Athletic Association). Now, there are many different sports girls can participate in.

Each year, the football team always takes their team photo in the stadium's bleachers.

Each year during Homecoming Week, each day of the week is a different theme, where students get to dress up.

The Journalism classes continue the tradition of working on the school's publications, which now include social media, as well as a yearbook and newspaper.

Students show off their Rocky pride during the Homecoming football game by dressing in school colors.

AT THE ROCK

at the rock

Every year during the Homecoming Pep Rally, each pair of partners on court escort each other onto the field to do a dance in their Homecoming attire.

P R I D E

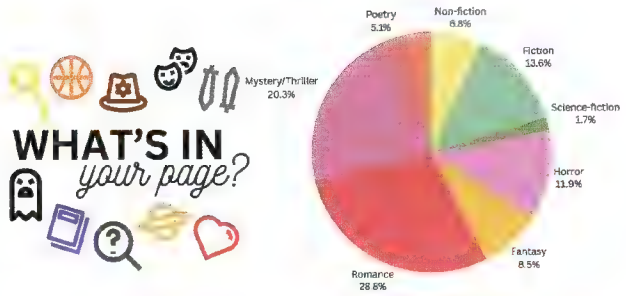
Rocky's Marching Band always plays while marching in the Homecoming Parade.

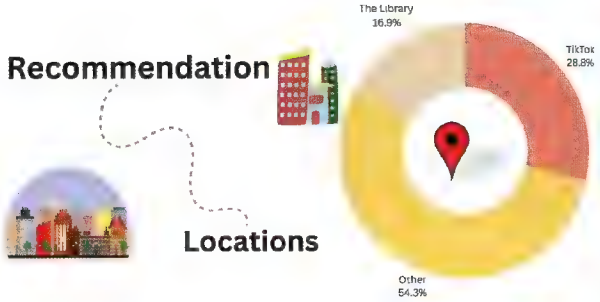
Students in the student section showcase "Our Way" of showing off school pride with not only school colors, but also different props, like the RI flag that is used when the football team scores.

Every fall, the Theatre Department puts on their annual Fall Play. Students work hard to put on a great performance for their friends and family.

During the Homecoming Pep Rally, each year there's a contest, in which students can compete against one another. While the activity itself may vary, it's tradition for there to be a contest of some sort.

Rocky's Choir continues to put on great performances every year for the school and the community.



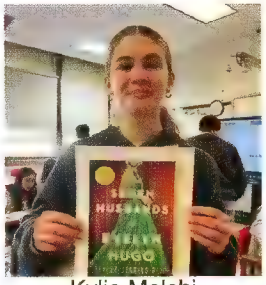


FROM ONE PAGE to the next

Eva Essman

Favorite Book: *The Deal* by Elle Kennedy

Books Read in 2023: 45



Kylie Melchi

Favorite Book: *The Seven Husbands of Evelyn Hugo* by Taylor Jenkins Reid

Favorite Style: Hardcover, Time Jumps, and First Person

Haleigh Laud

Favorite Book: *Be Not Far From Me* by Mindy McGinnis

Books Read in 2023: 56

Elaina Biswell

Favorite Book: *You Know I'm No Good* by Jessie Ann Foley

Favorite Style: Hardcover, Single Perspective, and First Person

Abby Dillard

Favorite Book: *If He Had Been With Me* by Laura Nowlin

Books Read in 2023: 5

Ella Leahy

Favorite Book: *The Summer of Broken Rules* by K.L. Walther

Favorite Style: Paperback, Dual Perspective, First Person, and Stand Alone

Alexa Massie

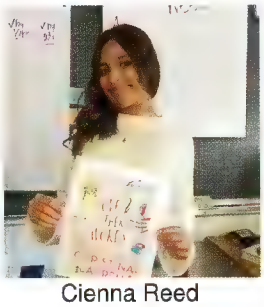
Favorite Book: *The Song of Achilles* by Madeline Miller

Favorite Style: Paperback, Dual Perspective, and First Person

Maya Decker

Favorite Book: The Silent Patient by Alex Michalides

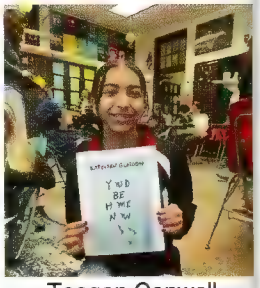
Books Read in 2023: 15



Cienna Reed

Favorite Book: *Love and Other Words* by Christina Lauren

Favorite Style: Paperback, Dual Perspective, and Third Person



Teegan Conwell

Favorite Book: *You'd Be Home Now* by Kathleen Glasgow

Books Read in 2023: 15

"I think it's important that Rocky has a diverse range of students because different cultures coming together creates a big community of students, who get to know different aspects of the world."
- Yaretzi Jimenez

"I personally think that it's good for us to have such a diverse group, to show us how other people's cultures and religions are different."
- Cory Beltran

"A lot of people move to the QC because of work, and when you're around a lot of people, you don't feel lonely."
- Easter Naing

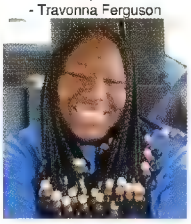
"I think it's important because all races can learn about what they're struggling on. If people are struggling, going to school can help you learn more. People who don't understand English that much can learn more about it. It's good that this school supports all races of students."
- Olivier Obedi

"You feel more accepted at Rocky due to the range of diversity. There are people from all around the world at Rocky, and you just feel you fit in."
Julian Jimenez

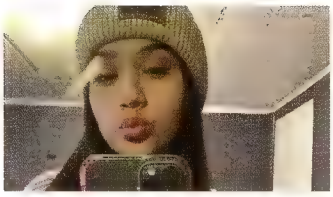
"For one, diversity he ps us learn from each other and understand that we are unique. I think that is something that is very important to have, in genera . Rocky is a school that represents that, and is open to everyone, no matter what they look like, where they come from, etc. I think it's a good example to other schools, as well."
- Travonna Ferguson

"I feel more at home. There's people I can relate to in my own culture."
- Abraham Gomez

"It's important that Rocky has diverse students because it g ves you opportunities to meet people who have had different lifestyles than you, because of their culture, and make you look at other cultures with a different mindset/view."
- Alonnah Calhoun



"Being in a space where people look like you, come from the same background as you, and can relate to you is uplifting. Being able to share with each other our experiences, and understanding where you're coming from, because they've been through similar situations."
- Khadija Sakho



"My favorite tradition as a Mexican is Las Posadas. Las Posadas are held the week before Christmas, in honor to celebrate Jesus' arrival. There is music, dancing, candy, food, pinatas, and lots of family."
- Laura Avalos

"My favorite tradition is the Karen New Year. It includes don dance and Karen food, as well as instruments. It is my favorite because I like the fact that we still remember our culture."
- Ywa Htoo

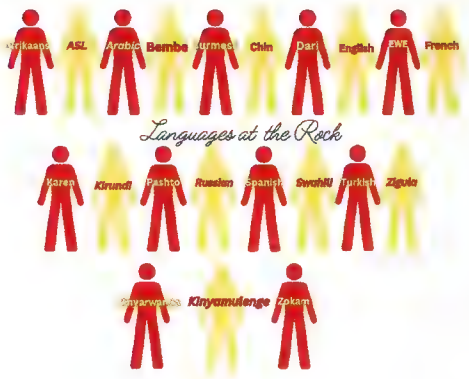
"My favorite tradition is when someone gets married, right before the wedding, the bride would get drawn all over her body. It's my favorite because it's one of the defining points of their lives."
- Grace Hodonou

"My favorite tradition from my culture would have to be Rosca de Reyes. This translates to the Wreath of the Kings. This bread holds these white plastic babies, and if you're unfortunate to get a baby, you have to host a party, and make tamales."
- Angelo Mojica

"I grew up in a very large, musical family. When our extended family would gather for Thanksgiving or Christmas, we would often have a little program, n which people would play a solo on an instrument or someone would sing, and one of my aunts or my grandma would accompany on the piano. Then, my grandpa would request various songs, and we would all sing them together, while someone played the piano. Everyone joined in - it was a ways a special time when we a l got together."
Mr. Voigt

"Boxing Day started back in England. The wealthy would have their servants work on Christmas, and the day after, they would box up their gifts and leftovers, and give them to their servants. Traditionally, I cook ham, turkey, and potatoes, and have everyone else bring something, usually leftovers from their Christmas parties. We just sit around, chat, and eat and play games. Not a .ot of people celebrate it."
- Mrs. Regan

At Rocky, students and staff take pride in our diversity. This year, Rocky students come from 25 different countries, and speak a total of 21 different languages. This exposure to differen cultures and languages is a vital and valued part of the Rocky experienc



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OUR FAREWELL *our farewell*

CREATING THE BOOK *our way*

To Our Readers:

The yearbook you are reading was created by a staff of roughly 40 sophomores, juniors, and seniors, and one advisor. While many of our staff were new to Journalism, we had a group of returning editors, who set the tone of hard work and success for the group. The staff and editors made sure we hit every deadline this year, a huge accomplishment for a group of very busy and involved high school students. We made every attempt to produce an error free book, with all names spelled correctly. However, it is possible that we have made some unintentional errors.

As an advisor, I'm incredibly proud of this yearbook staff. They took on the challenge to create a yearbook, a theme, and an inclusive history of Rock Island High School during the 2023-24 school year, and I believe they did well. The students were tasked with learning how to interview, create layouts, take photographs, write articles, and track down sources. While the school maintains records and statistics of the year, my staff has the only retelling of the year from the student perspective. The staff met during 2nd and 3rd hour every day. Their work was fueled by snacks, coffee and energy drinks, Taylor Swift music, and celebrations for meeting every deadline. Their teamwork set the standard for future yearbook staffs.

To the parents and staff members who provided us with pictures (Jennifer Pendleton, Mrs. Janssen, AJ Hyde, Jarrin Williams, Josh Parr, Melanie Putnam, Mrs. Cartwright-Boyd, and Jeff Ignatius, to name a few), we thank you. You helped our staff more than you know, and we are grateful. To the yearbook staffers, thank you for working so hard to tell the many perspectives of the Rock. You are an exceptional staff, and your efforts are so appreciated. To the Rocky community, please enjoy this Watchtower, and know we did our best to tell this year's story of Rock Island High School.

- Mrs. Vens & the Watchtower Staff

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Professional portraits were provided by Photographic Arts by GPI.

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